DEVELOPING BUSINESS CASE STUDIES FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

Simon Darcy, Bruce Cameron, Shane Pegg and Tanya Packer
Technical Reports

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National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Darcy, Simon.

Developing business case studies for accessible tourism.

ISBN: 9781921521041 (pdf) 9781921521034 (pbk.)

Notes: Bibliography. Issued also in printed form.

Tourism—Research—Australia.
Physically handicapped—Travel—Australia.
Older people—Travel—Australia.
Business—Research—Australia.

Other Authors/Contributors: Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism.

Dewey Number: 338.479194072

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General Manager, Communications and Industry Extension or Publishing Manager, via info@crctourism.com.au

First published in Australia in 2008 by CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd

Edited by Kelly Van Asperen

Printed in Australia (Gold Coast, Queensland)

Cover designed by Sin Design
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Abstract
The research project was an STCRC scoping project to study a procedure for undertaking accessible tourism business cases. The project sought to case study examples of high standard accessible tourism product, facility or experience. The accessible tourism market is comprised of seniors and people with disabilities with access needs. It is recognised in the literature that there are significant barriers that constrain the tourism experiences of the group. A key component in the constraint is the supply of accessible tourism product and the understanding of the elements of business success with the market by the tourism industry.

The methodology was informed by a case study approach and the triple bottom line scorecard. The research design sought to expand the thinking in general business performance more broadly than financial measures. The evaluation of environmental and social benefits has become part of core corporate practice.

The preliminary work utilised a Delphi group to identify a range of high standard of accessible product, across states, segments and reflecting a range of ownership structures.

The next stage involved developing a Business Case Instrument to ‘capture’ triple bottom line metrics. The ‘metrics’ were collected through reviews of management information systems, in-depth interviews with key informants and review of other performance information. The research resulted in five business case studies on which the refined Business Case Instrument was based. This will assist the industry stakeholders to understand the components likely to be present when a destination experience meets the needs of travellers with a disability. The research suggests that provision can be improved by each organisation but that provision of access will not be the only factor present in a business successfully meeting the needs of travellers seeking an accessible destination experience. The purpose of this technical report is to document and present the business case instrument. The business case studies are to be used for refereed journal articles and conference presentations.

Acknowledgements
The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, established and supported under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centre’s Program, funded this research.

The research team would like to acknowledge the work of the following organisations and principals for their preparedness to commit to the success of the research project:

- Mr Keith Baker—Tourism New South Wales
- Scott Campbell—Perth Convention Bureau Limited
- Pip Daly-Smith—Disability Services Commission (WA) and
- Tourism Western Australia Reference Group
- Lyn Hatton—Leisure Options Pty Ltd
- Karen Dineen—Lakeside Holiday Park, Sydney
- Jill Perry—Hervey Bay Whale Watch
- Greg Wilson—O’Carrolly’s Eco Resort
- Suzanne Bain-Donohue—NICAN

I would also like to thank all those people who provided feedback to the draft versions of the report as they have contributed to strengthening the final document substantially.

Dr Simon Darcy, 11 April 2008
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The realisation of economic, environmental and social benefits in the tourism industry demands an understanding of the broader issues of visitor accessibility. It is paramount that the tourism industry appreciates all the elements that contribute towards positive visitor experiences and the nexus with capacity building in the industry. Visitor accessibility encompasses all tourism markets including seniors and people with disabilities who have been defined through accessible tourism (Darcy 2006). There are significant structural barriers that may constrain the experiences of this group in tourism. The research contends that one key constraint is the lack of information available to the broader industry which profiles successful enterprises operating in accessible tourism.

The lack of industry awareness of organisational benefits that flow from accessible product supply in tourism remain undefined. Many businesses meet their legislative requirements, for example, accessible parking and accessible toilets, but don’t consider the issue further. Industry has not connected a high standard of access provision with other elements of corporate performance.

One reason for this is the lack of case studies highlighting the business success of enterprises which are committed to servicing the accessible tourism industry. The only case study in the Australian context is The Tourism Challenge: Access for All (Office of National Tourism, 1998). This research sought to identify the profile of enterprises regarded by the research team as providing a high quality accessible tourism product or experience. This study employed the triple bottom line concept of measuring business performance to assist develop the case studies.

Approach

The philosophical stance of the research team is that there has been little attention paid to understanding the elements which comprise a successful accessible tourism enterprise. A great deal of research around sustainability has ignored social arguments, where ageing and disability are global demographic changes that the tourism industry needs to engage with, for it to be both economically efficient and socially and environmentally sustainable. Greater awareness will enable industry to better plan for accessible tourism product development and delivery. It is noted that to this point in time, no STCRC funded projects have considered these issues as part of a fundamental shift in mindset. This project offers the opportunity to demonstrate a broader understanding of accessible tourism in terms of economic, social and environmental considerations.

It should be stated that this project is considered to be a scoping project where the information gathered points the way towards further research offering an expanded approach in Business Cases. The research team documented the business case for accessible tourism through the development of business based case studies of successful operators offering accommodation, tourism experiences and hospitality by identifying the individual business performance on the triple bottom line (financial, social and environmental).

Objectives of Study

The aim of the research was to bring the insights and interdisciplinary expertise of the research team to develop best business practice case studies in accessible tourism. This project builds upon the STCRC-funded workshop held on 12 July 2005: Sydney—Setting a Research Agenda for Accessible Tourism. Key findings are contained in the subsequent report (Darcy, 2006). This research project seeks to address the third prioritised outcome from that workshop: Industry Engagement—The Business Case for Accessible Tourism, by documenting the business case for accessible tourism through the development of business based, case studies of successful operators.

The objectives of the research project were to:
• document the business case for accessible tourism through the development of business based case studies of successful operators
• identify examples of ‘best practice’ in delivery of accessible tourism product
• identify the key indicators or key result areas to measure the business case, social case and environmental case
• develop and refine a Business Case Instrument to reflect the key result areas and facilitate data collection
• collect information and document each business case, social case and environmental case
• use innovative methods of information presentation to present the above measured information
• develop an innovative format to present the case studies to industry to demonstrate the benefits to the triple bottom line for the provision of inclusive tourism practices.

Methodology

Due to the relative lack of attention to accessible tourism business case studies within academic and business research, an explorative qualitative research approach is appropriate (Morse, 1991, p. 121). Such an approach was employed using selected cases as the objects for study. The methodology was informed by case study approaches and the triple bottom line scorecard. The research design sought to expand the thinking in general business to consider performance more broadly than financial measures. The evaluation of environmental and social benefits has become part of core corporate practice. The preliminary work utilised a Delphi group to identify a range of high standard of accessible product, across states, segments and reflecting a range of ownership structures. The next stage involved developing a Business Case Instrument to ‘capture’ triple bottom line metrics. The ‘metrics’ work collected through reviews of management information systems, in-depth interviews with key informants and review of financial and performance information.

Collectively, the information gathered in the context of each case served as its data base. The information sources contained notes from the case study interviews, copies of documents and archival material sourced for the study. Tabular material was generated from these sources. A matrix of categories or themes, placing the evidence collected within them, and developing, as appropriate, flowcharts, tables and frequency tables, facilitated a process of analysis and interpretation involving continual reflection about the data. The research employed a three stage process:

**Stage One: Delphi**

This stage employed the experience of the research team and a selected Delphi group to determine critical components of the research:

- possible best-practice examples of accessible tourism for inclusion
- key measures to determine successful examples of the accessible tourism best-practice
- develop the Business Case Instrument (BCI) reflecting the key measures

The research involved a series of iterations involving an e-mail survey of the Delphi group, individual interviews with the group and finally a focus group meeting (in person and via teleconference) gaining final agreement on the two components to be operationalised in this research.

**Stage Two: Fieldwork**

This stage operationalised Stage One with the case study approach. It involved approaching the identified participants with the BCI by e-mail which followed with phone calls and in person visits to the identified businesses. This stage was highly iterative involving a series of continual reflections about the data which involved completing the BCI and revisiting e-mails, phone calls and in some cases in person visits.

**Stage Three: Data Analysis and Report Writing**

This stage applied a common base-line methodology to each business, on top of which the research team explored different approaches and methods. The research identified key measures which reflect best business practice in accessible tourism.

As Table 1 shows, the research identified businesses delivering excellence in accessible tourism across a range of parameters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Sub-group</th>
<th>Ownership Structure</th>
<th>Location/Scope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination Experiences</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Operators</td>
<td></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td></td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings

The research developed a BCI comprising a series of Key Indicators or Key Result Areas to reflect good business practice meeting the components of the triple bottom line concept, reflecting a call for the tourism industry to adopt universal design principles as a foundation to achieving greater social sustainability as part of the triple bottom line (Rains, 2004):

- Financial Report Card
- Environmental Report Card
- Social Report Card

The purpose of this technical report is to document and present the business case instrument. The business case studies are to be used for refereed journal articles and conference presentations.
Language and Glossary

This paper employs ‘person first language’ in response to Darcy’s (2002) discussion about the importance of language in disability studies. ‘The power of language is overwhelming’ (Corbett, 1996, p. 2) and as Corbett explains, language has a significant influence on attitudes and perceptions, and hence policy and practice. The term ‘people with disabilities’ is a general term that is accepted when discussing disability in Australia (Hume, 1994) and in most Western countries. It places the emphasis on the person first and foremost and the disability, whatever that may be, second. It does not separate the terms, only placing an order to their use. However, as Darcy (2002) acknowledges, Oliver (1990) and others deliberately use the term ‘disabled persons’ as a powerful signifier, indicating that the disabling nature of society produces ‘disabled people’. The person first approach to the language of disability has been reinforced internationally with the recently constituted UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the International Day for People with Disabilities (United Nations, 2007). To reflect these enabling language practices, tourist with a disability will be used.

- **Accessible destination experiences**
  Accessible destination experiences take direction from universal design principles to offer independent, dignified end equitable experiences that provide ‘a sense of place’ within the destination region for people with disabilities and seniors (Darcy et al., 2008).

- **Accessible tourism**
  Accessible tourism is a process of enabling people with disabilities and seniors to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universal tourism products, services and environments (adapted from Olympic Coordination Authority, 1999). The definition is inclusive of the mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access.

- **Access precincts**
  Access precincts are places or spaces that are inclusive of people with mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive disabilities and have been universally designed to maximise equitable, dignified and independent use. The concept of a continuous pathway is extended by access precincts to incorporate those areas linking public and commercial service providers, and the common domain (Darcy, 2003a).

- **Citizenship**
  Citizenship is ‘the ultimate expression of a person’s commitment to the nation’ (Millet, cited in Meekosha & Dowse, 1997, p. 49). However, within the disability context, citizenship is fraught with complications including power, politics and exclusionary practices of people who do not fit the norm. Contemporary citizenship exercises inclusion of active, productive citizens and emphasises democracy and civil society, but excludes passive receipt of social and welfare rights (Meekosha & Dowse, 1997).

- **Continuous (accessible) pathway**
  A continuous pathway is an uninterrupted path of travel to or within a building providing access to all required facilities. Note: For non-ambulatory people, this accessible path does not incorporate any step, stairwell or turnstile, revolving door, escalator or other impediment which would prevent it being negotiated by people with a disability (Standards Australia, 2001, p. 8).

- **Disability**
  Disability is defined as a complex set of social relationships imposed on top of a person’s impairment due to the way society is organised. Hence, disability is the product of the social relationships that produce disabling barriers and hostile social attitudes that exclude, segregate and oppress people with disabilities and deny them their rights of citizenship. The social model regards disability as the product of the social, economic and political relationships (the social relations) rather than locating it as the fault of an individual’s impairment (embodiment). This approach to disability separates impairment from the social relations of disability (Oliver 1990, cited in Darcy, 2004, p. 10).

- **Easy access markets**
  An easy access market is any segment within the tourism market that prefers accessing tourism experiences with ease. This may include seniors who may prefer walking up a gentle ramp rather than tackling a large number of stairs. People with a disability, including those with physical and sensory disabilities, will find it easier to access tourism facilities where there is a continuous pathway and tactile surfaces and clear signage (Tourism New South Wales, 2005).
• **Universal design**

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialised design … The intent of the universal design concept is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by more people at little or no extra cost. The universal design concept targets all people of all ages, sizes and abilities (Center for Universal Design, 2003).

• **Triple Bottom Line**

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) accounting means expanding the traditional company-reporting framework to include environmental and social performance in addition to financial performance¹. TPL reporting is a more quantitative summary of a company’s economic, environmental and social performance over the previous year (Storer & Frost, 2002).

• **Financial Report Card**

The Financial Report Card (FRC) is a series of financial indicators which are identified as having specific interest to an organisation in reflecting organisational health or well-being. The FRC focuses on components such as absolute outcome, percentage movement, variations to budget and the current cash position, all reflecting the financial performance and health of the enterprise.

• **Environmental Report Card**

The Environmental Report Card (ERC) is a series of indicators which are identified as having specific interest to an organisation in reflecting organisational performance in respect to the environment. The ERC focuses on components such as waste water quality and recycling, recycled solid waste, weed and pest control, greenhouse gas emission reduction, reclamation and conservation projects all reflecting the enterprises’ impact on the environment.

• **Social Report Card**

The Social Report Card (SRC) is a series of indicators which are identified as having specific interest to an organisation in reflecting organisational performance in respect to various social elements. The SRC focuses on components such as employee safety, workplace stability, community support, involving the community, community works and partnerships all reflecting the enterprises’ impact on society and local community.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the broader issues of visitor accessibility is paramount to positive visitor experiences and building capacity in the tourism industry. The realisation of economic benefits is a key driver for the tourism industry. However, little research exists in Australia or overseas which offers guiding examples of successful tourism industry enterprises offering accessible tourism experiences.

The intention behind this research is to develop Business Case Studies of Australian tourism businesses currently offering accessible tourism experiences. Further, the contention of the researchers is that Australian tourism businesses which are offering accessible experiences are likely to be highly aware of Environmental and Social benefits deriving from their businesses.

The challenges associated with ensuring that people can experience positive tourism experiences must be fully understood before access can be effectively planned and managed. Visitor accessibility encompasses all tourism markets including seniors and people with disabilities who have been defined as the accessible tourism market. However, there are significant barriers that may constrain tourism experiences of the group and a key component impacting on this constraint is a lack of understanding by the tourism industry as to the make-up or profile of a successful tourism business in accessible tourism.

Objectives

The objectives of the research project were to:

- document the business case for accessible tourism through the development of business based case studies of successful operators
- identify examples of ‘best practice’ in delivery of accessible tourism product
- identify the key indicators or key result areas to measure the business case, social case and environmental case
- develop and refine a Business Case Instrument to reflect the key result areas and facilitate data collection
- collect information and document each business case, social case and environmental case
- use innovative methods of information presentation to present the above measured information
- develop an innovative format to present the case studies to industry to demonstrate the benefits to the triple bottom line for the provision of inclusive tourism practices.

Context

This research project was instigated as an STCRC project. The following universities are to be acknowledged for their substantial in-kind contributions:

- The University of Technology, Sydney
- University of Queensland
- Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia.

STCRC Research Agenda for Accessible Tourism

The research project takes direction from the STCRC report 80053 Setting a Research Agenda for Accessible Tourism (Darcy, 2006), which identified industry engagement as one major area for research.

Industry Engagement – Developing Collaboration

There is evidence of many enterprises providing excellent accessible recreation and tourism services. However, these providers had little profile beyond their customer base. Very little work has been carried out to document best-practice cases of accessible recreation and tourism providers since 1998 (Culyer, 1997; Office of National Tourism, 1998). Within the precinct area, current accessible destination experiences were to be reviewed from all sectors of the tourism industry and other relevant sectors (arts and recreation). It was noted that there is a need for a government driver of accessible tourism to provide opportunities for collaboration so those who are providing accessible destination experiences have an opportunity to collaboratively leverage these opportunities.
This requires a level of industry engagement to bring together suppliers to work in a collaborative fashion with destination managers and the State Tourism Organisations. It is envisaged that such collaboration would be one flow-on outcome resulting from this research.

This research project was an outcome from the STCRC-funded workshop, Setting a Research Agenda for Accessible Tourism; the key findings were contained in the subsequent report (Darcy, 2006). The outcomes of the workshop prioritised three short term accessible tourism research projects:

**Information Provision, Marketing and Promotion for the Vision Dimension of Disability**
- Determine the relevant information requirements, format and presentation preferences for people with vision impairment across each sector of the tourism industry.
- Test the validity of the information outcomes through a Delphi technique (advocacy groups), focus groups or a broader survey.
- The outcome could inform the inclusion of a vision dimension to apply to the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse.

**Total Product Development**
- Operationalise universal design and easy living principles within accessible tourism product development.
- Test the operability of the concepts through place based approaches, local access precincts and access trail development.

**Industry Engagement: The Business Case for Accessible Tourism**
- Document the business case for accessible tourism through the development of business based case studies of successful operators.

This research project addresses the third outcome prioritised by the workshop and develops a number of business case studies of tourism enterprises providing a good accessible tourism experience.

The next chapter sets the background in accessible tourism research against which this research project takes place.
Chapter 2

CONTRIBUTING RESEARCH CONCEPTS

This chapter presents a brief background to accessible tourism research by first outlining the relationship between disability, ageing and tourism. Second, it reviews the development of easy access markets and accessible tourism, and places these in context to universal design. Third, the chapter overviews disability and built environment legislation that shapes accessible tourism environment. This chapter lays the context for the research project which addresses a gap in the information available to the industry when assessing and planning accessible tourism projects.

Disability, Ageing and Tourism

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2004) reveals substantial numbers of Australians have disabilities, and the level of disability in the community increased from 15 to 20 per cent of the population from 1988 to 2003. Figure 1 shows a significant relationship between ageing and disability; a person is 14 times more likely to have a disability by the time they reach 65 years than as a four-year-old (ABS, 2004).

![Figure 1: Disability Rates by Age and Sex]

Disability, Ageing and Tourism

Australia has an ageing population and the numbers and proportion of older people in Australia is growing (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002). This situation is reflected in all western developed nations with a noticeable difference in Asian countries where ageing is occurring at a faster rate (Altman, 1975; World Health Organization, 2007). These trends have considerable implications for global tourism (Dwyer, 2005). There are significant numbers of Australians and people from overseas that have disabilities, 600 million people worldwide (Fujiura & Rutkowskikmitta, 2001).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has reflected concerns of ageing with the recent release of Global Age-friendly Cities: A Global Guide (2007). The guide offers directions for urban planners, but also instils accountability through providing a checklist that older citizens can use to ‘monitor progress towards more age-friendly cities’ (World Health Organization, 2007). Despite statistical evidence and advances in urban planning, there has been very little Australian research or policy that has sought to systematically engage with disability and tourism (Darcy, 2004).
Defining Accessible Tourism

The relationship between disability and ageing is undoubted and presents a challenge for the global tourism industry. In Europe and America, this has been recognised and the tourism industry has been seeking ways to ensure that its infrastructure and products are accessible. Design, planning and any service operation can benefit from the principles of universal design that address the Easy Access Market (EAM) (Tourism New South Wales, 2005). Tourism New South Wales identifies EAM as:

*Any segment within the tourism market that prefers accessing tourism experiences with ease. This may include seniors who may prefer walking up a gentle ramp rather than tackling a large number of stairs. People with a disability, including those with physical and sensory disabilities, will find it easier to access tourism facilities where there is a continuous pathway and tactile surfaces and clear signage.*

Effectively, the majority of people will benefit from these provisions including our ageing population, parents with prams, and employees as it incorporates good design for a range of occupational health and safety requirements (Preiser & Ostroff, 2001).

Visitor numbers to Australia from overseas will double by the year 2015 and beyond, and there is a steadily increasing domestic tourism market (Tourism Forecasting Committee, 2005). Amongst these people will be an increasing number of people with disabilities and people who are ageing. The greying of the population is both a Western and Asian phenomenon and many of our most lucrative international markets are drawn from countries experiencing an ageing of the population. Yet, unlike past generations of older people, this generation of baby boomers is seeking active, fulfilling and adventurous experiences for their post work lives (Hilt & Lipschultz, 2005; Mackay, 1997; McDougall, 1998; Moschis, 2000; Muller & Cleaver, 2000). Tourism is seen as an important component of this quest for life experiences and the tourism industry and government are planning to incorporate the needs of the combined Easy Access Market for accessible tourism (Commonwealth Department of Industry Tourism and Resources, 2003; Tourism Australia, 2005a; Tourism New South Wales, 2005).

The Commonwealth Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (2003) has identified people with disabilities and seniors as an emerging market area and Tourism Australia (2005a) has established accessible tourism as a niche experience. However, to this point in time, there has not been a research, or industry, strategy developed to realise the opportunity that these groups offer. The STCRC workshop provided an opportunity to bring together the stakeholders to collaboratively develop a research agenda for disability and tourism.

Accessible tourism is not defined in any of the government documents. A 2005 STCRC-funded workshop was held to develop an agenda for accessible tourism, which proposed a working definition for accessible tourism. The definition was:

*... a process of enabling people with disabilities and seniors to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universal tourism products, services and environments (adapted from OCA 1999). The definition is inclusive of the mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access (Darcy, 2006, p.4).*

The other term central to the development of accessible tourism is universal design. Universal design is a paradigm that extends the concepts of continuous pathways, access and mobility, and barrier-free environments to incorporate intergenerational and lifespan planning that recognises the nexus between ageing, disability and the continuum of people over lifespan (Aslaksen et al., 1997; Steinfeld & Shea, 2001). Universal design has been defined as follows:

*Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialised design ... The intent of the universal design concept is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by more people at little or no extra cost. The universal design concept targets all people of all ages, sizes and abilities (Center for Universal Design, 2003).*

There has been a call for the tourism industry to adopt universal design principles as a foundation to achieving greater social sustainability as part of the triple bottom line (Rains, 2004). The Designing for the 21st Century III conference on universal design that had a stream on the travel and tourism industry ended with delegates proposing the Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Sustainable Social Development, Disability & Ageing (Walsh, 2004). Together with the previously mentioned WHO (2007), momentum has developed placing
accessible tourism firmly on the globalised tourism agenda. In many countries, the framework for developing accessible tourism or implementing universal design can be found in the building codes and the accessibility standards. Yet, this is not a case for all countries particularly in the developing world. The next section of the report briefly reviews the Australian context of the built environment legislation for access and mobility.

## Market Size and Economic Modelling

Globally there are over 650 million people with disabilities (Fujiura & Rutkowski, 2001; Mercer & MacDonald, 2007), equating to about 10% of humanity. Approximately 20% of the Australian population, or 4 million people, identify as having a disability. Of these people 520,000 have a mobility disability, 480,000 are blind or vision impaired, and 1 million are deaf or hearing impaired (ABS, 2003). The numbers of people with disabilities are set to increase due to the ageing of the population. WHO (2007) state that by 2020 there will be 1.2 billion people over 60 years of age. The ‘greying’ of the population has been well documented by the ABS, identified by Tourism Research Australia as a market opportunity (Tourism Australia, 2005b) and is a phenomenon that affects all of our major inbound markets. These trends have considerable implications for global tourism (Dwyer, 2005).

Reedy’s (1993) seminal book on marketing to people with disabilities was the first to use the powerful population estimate of 43 million Americans to gain the attention of the US business sector. Similarly, Touche Ross (1993) and Keroul (1995) used estimates of disability in the European and Canadian populations to argue the market potential of the group. The first Australian market study was undertaken by Darcy (1998) where he estimated travel by individuals with disabilities was worth AUS$473 million, or their group travel was valued at AUS$1.3 billion. Darcy’s (1998) study differed from earlier work by introducing empirical data on travel patterns of the group undertaken in the previous 12 months. His study was modelled on the Bureau of Tourism Research’s domestic and international visitor surveys, and applied to national survey data on the rates of disability in the Australian community (ABS, 1993).

Burnett and Bender Baker (2001) and Bagshaw (2003) both drew attention to the discretionary income of these groups through nationally collected data. It was not until 2002 and 2005 that the US accessible tourism market used a commissioned market research study by the Open Doors Organisation, collected travel patterns of people with disabilities. Through these figures it was estimated that people with disabilities contribute SUS127 billion to the economy each year with SUS13 billion directly attributed to travel (HarrisInteractive Market Research, 2005). Similarly, Neuman & Reuber’s (2004) study estimated German tourists make a €2.5 billion contribution to the economy where the European Union countries’ OSSATE research estimated that tourists with disabilities contribute €80 billion to the economy using gross demand estimates (Buhalis et al., 2005). From an inbound perspective, it has been estimated that 7–8% of international travellers have a disability and it is this group who directly contribute to increased Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the economy (Darcy, 2003b; HarrisInteractive Market Research, 2005).

To this point, the only method that has been used is gross demand with the addition of applying specifically collected travel patterns. These methods are rudimentary, not based on expenditure patterns and are not regarded as valid or reliable by economists (Dwyer et al., 2004). This research project offers the opportunity to draw on the expertise of tourism economist Professor Larry Dwyer to utilise the Tourism Satellite Accounts (Dwyer et al., 2004) and subsequently to implement Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling using the models for Australia and its eight states and territories as developed by the STCRC.

## Disability Access and Built Environment Legislation

In an Australian context, the process for developing accessible tourism is governed by the disability discrimination and built environment legislation. The introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 [Comm] (DDA) ensured that there are legal controls against discrimination on the grounds of disability. The spirit and intent of the DDA is further reinforced through existing and complementary state legislation and strategies. Provisions for mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive access are complemented through each state’s environmental planning and development legislation. Each state’s planning process makes reference to the Building Codes of Australia (Australian Building Codes Board, 1996) and this in turn calls upon Australian Standards for Access and Mobility (Standards Australia, 1992, 1993, 1999, 2001). Under the DDA, two disability standards had a significant impact on tourism. The first is the Disability Standard for Accessible Public Transport (Commonwealth Attorney General’s Dept., 2005) that stipulates the levels of accessibility for public transport. The second is more recent where the Australian Building Codes Board (2004a) has entered into a process with Commonwealth Attorney General’s Dept. and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity
Commission (2004) (HREOC) to harmonise the DDA with the Australian Building Codes through the development of a draft Disability Standard for Access to Premises (Commonwealth Attorney General's Dept., 2004). The draft standards are at an impasse that includes all aspects of the built environment, the common domain and class three accommodation (Australian Building Codes Board, 2004b).

Within context to this research project, the urban tourism precinct is an established area that contains significant historical, cultural, heritage and built environments (e.g. the Rocks, the Sydney Opera House) and outdoor environments (e.g. Sydney Harbour and the Royal Botanic Gardens). The DDA is not retrospective legislation and has significant clauses for 'unjustifiable hardship'. This research project will seek to build on accessible destination experiences available within the precinct and provide a way of reinterpreting environments to provide an enabling accessible tourism experience. To do so, direction will be taken from best practice in:

- city accessibility (Aslaksen et al., 1997; Gleeson, 2001; Goldsmith & PRP Architects (Firm), 2000; Hall & Imrie, 2001; Imrie, 1996; Sawyer & Bright, 2004);
- historic buildings (Goodall et al., 2005; Goodall & Zone, 2006; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2007; Martin, 1999);
- outdoor environments (Environment Canada Parks Service, 1993; Griffin Dolon, 2000; Sport and Recreation Victoria, 1997; U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers and Compliance Board (Access Board), 2005);
- information provision and website design (Cameron et al., 2003; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2002; Shi, 2006; Williams et al., 2004).

The outcome should empower people with disabilities to make informed decisions about whether accessible destination experiences are appropriate for their access and mobility needs. This short overview of the disability discrimination and built environment legislation frames the process for developing accessible tourism. Further, this research can take direction from the disability studies and the geographies of disability.

Case Studies, Tourism and Accessible Tourism

Many businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors are today seeking to transform themselves into more efficient and effective operations. Current issues pervading the industry relating to governance, sustainability and effective destination management have been shown to be critical factors for business success yet they have been addressed in only a piece-meal fashion by many tourism and hospitality operators in recent years. Unfortunately, many agencies have sought to change their service and product offerings only on the basis of an alignment with better fiscal (or revenue driven) business practices, be it related to the concepts of total quality management, organisational change, restructuring or right sizing (Kotter, 1998). An issue identified as a real concern by Elkington (1997, p. 109) who considered that ‘if any business was to prosper over the long term, it must continuously meet society’s needs for goods and services without destroying natural or social capital’.

The harsh reality though is that too few operators have given any real attention to the broader concept of the ‘Triple Bottom Line’ or TBL as it is often referred to in the literature. That is, an alignment of services and products with business activities that are considered socially, economically and environmentally sustainable or, as Gilkinson (1999, p. 2) described it, ‘reporting that gives consideration to financial outcomes, environmental quality and social equity’. In discussing the issue, Dwyer (2005, pp. 79–80) found that to date there had been little effort to exemplify for the tourism industry ‘why individual businesses should consider their environmental and social performance rather than their financial bottom line, or indeed, the role that individual businesses can play in achieving sustainable tourism development’. This is unfortunate to say the least as the tourism industry, in the Australian context, has become an important part of many regional communities as traditional industries have continued to decline in recent decades. A point not lost on Hall (2000, p. 136) who noted that any analysis of TBL with respect the tourism industry required due consideration of ‘the manner in which tourism and travel effect changes in collective and individual value systems, behaviour patterns, community structures, lifestyle and quality of life’. Thus, as an industry, tourism has become important not only in terms of increased spending patterns in regional areas, but also because of the flow-on effects that it accrues such as that related to community development and maintenance of transport, communications and training infrastructure (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002).

Hall (2003) noted that a key outcome of the recent push by various government tourism agencies throughout the world has been the trend towards the development of policies directly related to facilitating sustainable tourism. By and large, sustainable tourism has come to represent and encompass a set of principles, policy prescriptions, and management methods, which chart a path for tourism development such that a destination’s environmental resource base (including natural, built, social and cultural features) is protected for future
development (Welford & Ytterhus, 2004). Sustainability is often referred to in terms of the metaphorical triple bottom line, referring to the above noted consideration of economic, social and environmental goals and outputs. In this respect the WTO (2007) has argued that tourism is sustainable when it improves the quality of life of the host community; provides a high quality of experience for the visitor; and maintains the quality of the environment on which both the host community and the visitor depend. Yet the harsh reality is that many destinations are struggling to achieve sustainability for their economies, their environments, their cultures, and their tourism industries (Sheldon et al., 2005, p. 47). As such, and as noted by Dwyer and Sheldon (2005), sustainable tourism must be seen as a key component of sustainable development more generally. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987, p. 8) defines sustainable development as ‘meeting the needs of the present without jeopardising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs’.

Dwyer (2005) noted that it was now widely accepted that the tourism industry shares with a range of other stakeholders (eg. local residents and government) the obligation to protect and maintain the natural and cultural heritage resources of the planet, both to sustain economies and to be passed on unimpaired to future generations.

A trend that has, in turn, led to the development and use of codes of conduct to encourage appropriate behaviour towards host communities and the environment by various sections of the tourism industry, tourists, and the public sector. Interestingly, a key component of such codes has related to the notion that travel should be freely available to all people and that through travel, a greater level of understanding, education, conservation and peace can be achieved (WTO, 2001). This notion is supported by Darcy (2006) who has contended however that there still remains a range of barriers, social, environmental and economic, that currently prevent the full engagement of people with disabilities in such opportunities.

**What are tourism case studies?**

Tourism case studies are commonly presented as a detailed account of a tourism operation, industry, person or project over a given period of time. While the format of the case study may vary depending upon its purpose, they commonly incorporate information and data pertaining to the aims and objectives of a given operation, its strategies, and any identified weaknesses and challenges to it as a business entity. Case studies are also often used to chronicle over time the changes made by a given operation to best position itself in the competitive market place. As such, case studies are often used to highlight innovation and purposeful change.

**The value of case studies**

MacLagan (2003) contended that the mavericks of today’s business world are essential to champion new directions that create an organisation’s future. That is to say that to simply not adapt to change, or do nothing, is realistically no longer an option for the vast majority of business entities for, as noted by Holbeche (2006), unless organisations continue to adapt to changes in their environment, they are likely to enter a phase of strategic drift which is best characterised by lack of clarity, confusion and deterioration of performance. In this context therefore, case studies are valuable in that they provide a clear focus on such mavericks who more often than not have a clear focus on elements of individualism, the power of reason, the value of argument and the base importance for managers and leaders alike of self-expression (Arnold et al., 2005). As noted by Kotter (1998), the most general lesson to be learned from the more successful case studies is that the change process goes through a series of phases that, in total, requires a considerable length of time. That is to say, skipping key sequential steps in the process only serves to give the illusion of speed yet rarely provides the desired outcomes. A second, and equally important point argued by Kotter (1998, p. 3), is that making critical mistakes in any of the phases can have a devastating impact on operations in that momentum for positive change can be slowed and hard-won gains negated. While not all ventures are successful of course, each individual case study can nevertheless provide valuable insights for others as to what can and does work, and what does not. As such, they provide other the managers and owners of other operations with some guiding points as to what significant benefits can be derived by those operations that better align themselves with the broad notion of accessible tourism.

Case studies have also proven to be an invaluable aid in terms of management training and education; this being particularly true with respect to awareness, attitude and/or technique training and as a form of illustration for a particular point or issue. Key educational and/or learning outcomes that can accrue to an individual as a consequence of engaging in the review and analysis of case studies include:

- the provision of an exciting and dynamic educational experience
- the opportunity to reflect and think like the manager/owner in a given setting
- the ability to apply previous knowledge and expertise to a given situation
- the opportunity to practice problem resolution and decision making skills
- the chance to develop the skills required in order to better utilise others as a resource

DEVELOPING A BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM
• the opportunity to learn to think analytically and objectively
• the prospect of developing personal initiative
• the development of base skills in terms of projecting outcomes (Lynn, 1999).

Veal (2006) argued that case studies are also purposeful in terms of explanatory research where they can be used to test the applicability of an existing theory; such situations, he contended, where those where a theoretical proposition had not previously been tested empirically or where it had not been tested with respect to a particular environment. Veal suggested that case studies had particular worth in situations where there were competing theories or theoretical perspectives or where there was no known relevant theoretical framework (Veal, 2006). In the former, Veal argued that a case study might be used, for example, to explore the apparent impasse—to identify or highlight theoretical or empirical directions. In the latter, case studies might be used to assist in the development of new theoretical propositions or insights, which are consistent with the case study data, and which might be further tested at a later date by additional empirical study. A corresponding situation in evaluative research might be where no policies exist and research is undertaken in the first instance to establish whether or not there is any great need for a policy to be developed at all (Veal, 2006, p 110).

All things considered, the case study method is a powerful tool for evaluating/highlighting a particular issue or situation. The particular merits of this approach are summarised as follows:
• It has the ability to place people, organisations, events and experiences in their social and historical context.
• It can treat the subject of study as a whole, rather than abstracting a limited set of pre-selected features.
• Multiple methods—triangulation—are implicit and seen as a strength.
• The single or limited number of cases offers a manageable data collection task when resources are limited.
• Flexibility in data collection strategy allows researchers to adapt their research strategy as the research proceeds.
• There is no need to generalise to a defined wider population (Veal, 2006, p. 111).

Accessible tourism case studies as a vehicle of change
As far back as 1983, Mills noted the concern that ‘provision for the disabled in any type of holiday situation can no longer be regarded as an optional extra’ (1983, p. 81). Yet decades later, Stumbo and Pegg (2005) and Darcy (2006) noted that despite the large numbers of people with a disability living independently in the community; their growing financial wealth; and their desire to travel to various tourist related cultural and heritage locations; this group of consumers continues to be largely ignored by the tourism industry worldwide. Unfortunately, by failing to respond positively to the needs and desires of persons with disabilities, the tourism industry has effectively distanced itself from a vibrant, active, and relatively affluent consumer group, costing the industry millions, potentially billions, of dollars per year (Realising Potential, 2008).

The next chapter presents the methodology for developing business cases for accessible tourism.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

An important note for this exploratory study is that the research team is multidisciplinary, drawing from planning, business and health related disciplines from UTS, UQ and Curtin University. This spread of interests across the research team permitted an innovative outcome that might not have been achievable otherwise, with the approach to the case studies and the development of key measures in assessing the case studies a clear and purposeful example of this synergistic endeavour. The multidisciplinary nature of the research team permitted the inception of this project the scoping nature and the timeframe for delivery. The team regard this pilot project as an essential first step towards a broader opportunity to apply for funding to support a larger longer-term, broader sweeping project in 2008–2009. The aim of the research, as detailed in this report, was to collectively draw from the insights and expertise of the research team to identify and assist in the development of best practice business case studies in accessible tourism.

Justification for the Use of a Qualitative Research Approach

Every study must first commence with the selection of the most appropriate and valid research methodology in order to successfully collect the data required. It is imperative therefore, to choose from the outset a method that will allow the researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the pertinent field of study, whilst also enabling them the flexibility to document data from subjects to fully expose the issues related to the phenomena being studied. Since this research focused on businesses that had aligned themselves, in one manner or other, with the notion of the TBL and its connection with accessible tourism, it was imperative to select a purposeful stance for the collection of data. For this study therefore, it was decided to use a qualitative research approach that would facilitate the collection of in-depth data (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). Such an approach refers to the use of words as information to be analysed resulting in patterns that can be categorised and later be validated or challenged by the published research literature.

Essentially, ‘qualitative methods are employed to collect data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviours and to seek an understanding of actions, problems and processes in their social context’ (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004, p. 3). Importantly, qualitative methods provide a range of alternatives to researchers to assist participants to explain in their own words, with their personal experiences and feelings, significant issues that are of interest for the topic being studied. Different authors (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Miller & Glassner, 2004; Nagy & Leavy, 2004; Patton, 1987; Silverman, 2000) have agreed that qualitative methods are practiced with the aim of gaining deeper understanding of specified issues, by listening and analysing what participants of study areas reveal to the researcher. Moreover, these same authors also argued that there is a deeper level of knowledge gained by using qualitative methods than can be achieved using a quantitative methodology. The quantitative approach is characterised by rigid and standardised procedures, inflexibility, numeric data and a reliance on statistical procedures to analyse the data obtained, amongst others. The characteristics of both methodologies are presented in Figure 2.

The significant difference between both methodologies relates to the process of collecting the necessary information and in the ways it is analysed. Moreover, there exists disparity in both methodologies regarding reliability, validity and usability. Qualitative methods, for example, are characterised by a shorter time frame for collecting data that facilitates the consequent analysis. On the other hand, a qualitative approach is more time-consuming with the researcher’s skill playing a significant role in the process of acquiring information, and the process of reproducing data much more complex (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Nonetheless, with these characteristics in mind and given the exploratory nature of the study, a qualitative stance was adopted due to the fact that ‘qualitative data provides a means for understanding phenomena within their context’ (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002, p. 107).
According to Henderson (1991), there are different options available amongst the qualitative spectrum. These include participant and non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, unobtrusive measures and audio-visual analysis. With regards to this particular study, semi-structured interviews were undertaken in order to research the area of interest.

Interview methodology begins from the assumption that it is possible to investigate elements of the social by asking people to talk, and to gather or construct knowledge by listening to and interpreting what they say and to how they say it (Mason, 2002, p. 225).

In this instance, the researchers were of the view that this methodology was the most appropriate one to align with as it allowed the research team to move with certain liberty but, at the same time, offered a structure that resulted in all study participants going through the same process and questions. Nevertheless, ultimately is it up to the researcher's skills to gain knowledge and find patterns, since it becomes the prime instrument in this process (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Qualitative data is often set in a goal-free framework and search for discovery (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). Qualitative interviewing is particularly suitable when the researchers want to gain knowledge of how present situations evolve from past decisions or incidents (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). With this foundation, ‘the emphasis is placed upon studying things in their natural settings, interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them, humanising problems and gaining an insider’s perspective’ (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004, p. 4). The information that was sought for this study, in order to better understand how businesses had encapsulated the notion of accessible tourism into their everyday business operations, was only fully accessible by means of directly interviewing the managers or owners of such operations. While some focus was also given to a review of the historical documents related to a given operation, the overall focus of this study was however very much aligned with what the owner/operators had to say.

Benefits and Limitations of Qualitative Data Collection Techniques

‘Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit’ (Patton, 2002, p. 341). This particular qualitative method will produce some of the richest data (Henderson, 1991). One of the strengths of interviews is the face-to-face interaction between interviewer and respondent. ‘Interviewing is the best method for pursuing a subject in-depth, operating in a discovery mode, and creating interaction with an individual’, (Henderson, 1991, p. 71). This allows the researcher to obtain complete and precise information, and the chance to clarify questions (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). Likewise, it allows the interviewer to enter the participant’s mind and understand their perceptions (Berg, 1989; Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002; Miller & Glassner, 2004; Patton, 2002). In addition, it
is useful for gathering unstructured data that might appear during the process and presents the chance of listening to the true feelings of the interviewee (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). Similarly, interviews provide more flexibility and feedback, with the possibility that questions might change during the procedure according to the answers that the respondent gives. ‘Accurate responses to complex issues are possible in personal interviews because the interviewer can probe and ask the interviewee to provide examples’ (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002, p 168). The interviewer skills are imperative therefore to garner useful information and avoid bias (Patton, 2002). As stated by Holstein and Gubrium (2004, p. 144), the prime test ‘lies in extracting information as directly as possible, without contaminating it’.

Paradoxically, this is also viewed by some as one of the limitations of this form of methodology. That is to say, interviewers should be unbiased, avoid affecting participant’s answers and provide the necessary respect and environment for respondents to fully undertake their replies. The success of this method depends therefore on the researcher’s ability to seek out meaningful and relevant data (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). However, it is not a simple procedure and the inexperience of some researchers can play a decisive role in gathering relevant and purposeful data. Henderson and Bialeschki (2002) argued that the great amount of time dedicated to interviews is a limitation of this method, as is the sample size which will by necessity be smaller than those samples achieved via quantitative methods. In addition, the authors conclude that it is more complicated to undertake data analysis by this method than simply by interpreting quantitative findings. ‘The depth of understanding required to do qualitative interviewing makes it difficult for qualitative researchers to remain value free or neutral toward issues raised’ (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 12). For example, the interviewer can bias the answers by the rephrasing of a question, the interviewer’s tone of voice and language, the interviewer’s appearance and maybe their gender (Berg, 1989; Henderson, 1991; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). It was imperative therefore, that in collecting the raw data for this study, the researchers involved were cognisant of the perceptions that the interviewee has of the process, and the role those preconceived ideas have in affecting the level of willingness, and the form of information the respondent is willing to offer.

Research Design

It should be noted that the intent of this study was not to generate theory; rather, it was intended to describe specific situations and, in so doing, serve to better inform future planning and actions of those involved in the organisation, conduct and consideration of the business case for accessible tourism. These outcomes, as (Dey, 1993, p. 6) has previously argued, are both legitimate and worthwhile in the context of qualitative analysis. The research team engaged in this study employed a three stage process to meet the study objectives:

**Stage One – Delphi**

This stage made best use of the collective expertise and experience of the research team in consultation with a selected Delphi group to determine critical components to the research. Such effort was focussed on critical matters pertaining to:

- generating a list of possible best practice examples of accessible tourism for inclusion,
- the key measures to determine successful examples of the accessible tourism best practice, and
- developing a Business Case Instrument (BCI) to reflect these key measures.

It should be noted that the first two issues are not discrete. Rather, they were considered interdependent as well as overlapping. Hence, this research involved a series of iterations including an e-mail survey of the Delphi group, individual interviews with the group and finally a focus group meeting (in person or via teleconference) to gain final agreement on the two components as they were later operationalised in the study process.

**Stage Two – Fieldwork**

This stage served to effectively operationalise the findings of the Delphi stage of study. This stage involved providing the participants with the BCI by e-mail, followed with phone calls and personal visits by members of the research team to the businesses identified as engaging in TBL activities. Importantly, this stage was iterative involving a series of continual reflections about the data. As such, a necessary component of this stage was the revisiting of the data collected via e-mail, phone calls, and in some cases, in-person visits.

**Stage Three – Data Analysis and Report Writing**

The research applied a common base-line methodology to each business. In so doing, the research team was able to explore in some rigour the different approaches and methods utilised by differing business operations. Post this activity, the research team then sought to identify key measures which reflected best business practice with regards to accessible tourism. Such activity encapsulated consideration of:

- best practice in the delivery of accessible tourism product
- identification of businesses delivering excellence in accessible tourism across a range of parameters.
As a follow-on to the above detailed research effort, the research then developed a series of Key Indicators or Key Result Areas which it believes reflect good business practice and which, importantly, serve to meet the core components that drive the Triple Bottom Line concept. These being:

- Financial Report Card
- Environmental Report Card
- Social Report Card

**Data Collection Method**

A major focus of the current study was the ongoing development of a Triple Bottom Line business case template for accessible tourism. This process involved an ongoing iteration between the literature, the data being gathered, the business owners and the researchers. This aspect involved an understanding that accessibility is based on four broad dimensions of access—mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive. For the purposes of the study, the case studies needed to incorporate any of the dimensions that were appropriate to the businesses. The businesses did not have to provide all four dimensions of access but did need to provide access related to one of these dimensions. To this point, a great deal of accessible tourism research has focused on people with mobility needs. However, there has been recent research into the tourism experiences of people with vision impairments (Packer et al., 2006), people who are deaf or hearing impaired (Deafness Forum & HMAA, 2005) and a great deal can be learnt from the work of the recreation sector with people who have cognitive disabilities. As such, the research team sought to draw together existing sources of information about access, best practice examples of formulating products, and evidence about how to meet the accessibility market’s needs, and applied this to developing the report cards.

While data was collected from a range of historical sources, it must be stated that the principal means of data collection for this study was by way of semi-structured face-to-face interviews. This versatile and flexible method is essentially a two-way conversation between an interviewer and a respondent (Mason, 2002; Zikmund, 2003). Interviews can adopt diverse characteristics, from telephone interviewing to personal or group interviewing (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). Similarly, the interview structure can be modified to suit specific needs. According to Patton (2002), there can be highly formalised and structured procedures, using standardised questions for each respondent, or interviews might be largely informal and unstructured conversations. The general goals of interviewing therefore are to create a positive atmosphere, obtain an adequate response, ask the questions properly, record the response and, wherever possible, seek to minimise or avoid outright biases (Balvanes & Caputi, 2001).

‘The standardised open-ended interview consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words’, (Patton, 2002, p. 342). This methodology minimises interviewer effects by presenting the same questions to all participants. Henderson and Bialeschki (2002) recognised three benefits in undertaking this approach during the data collection phase. These relate to the methodology instrument being available for inspection before and during the process, and that variations amongst respondents are minimised, ensuring greater consistency throughout the interview process. It is also worth noting that since the questions are planned ahead, there is also the added benefit of optimisation of the interviewee time. The aim ‘is to offer each subject approximately the same stimulus so that responses to the questions, ideally, may be comparable’, (Berg, 1989, p. 15).

**Other Data Sources Utilised**

Information sources drawn upon in this study to supplement that collected in the face-to-face interviews included:

- management information systems, e.g. internal reports, online material, brochures
- external studies/evaluations
- audio-visual material
- archival records, e.g. archived websites, organisational records detailing service provision.
After the list of best practice examples was generated by the Delphi, businesses were approached through letters and telephone calls for recruitment into the study. With respect to the individual businesses assessed as part of the overall study, forms of data collected included:

- **Access audit/management information systems**
  Audit using accredited access auditors through the ACAA (www.access.asn.au) and directed by a combination of the generic and specific contemporary best practice (Cameron, 2000; City of Melbourne, 2006; Villamanta Publishing, 1997). Disability Action Plans and relevant official documents of individual organisations were reviewed so as to not replicate previous work and provide a realistic time frame and consideration of the budget of the project.

- **Semi-structured interviews with business owners and workers**
  The interviews were designed to elicit the interviewee’s ideas and opinions regarding issues, innovations, constraints, enablers and possible solutions to accessibility in their establishments. This provided in-depth knowledge of how key providers manage accessibility within their precincts. This method allowed the researchers to explore unexpected facts or attitudes in relation to accessibility.

- **Observation of the businesses**
  This involves both participant observation and unobtrusive observation of the establishments’ access features, overall product and in some cases, financial records.

### Data Analysis

The information gathered in the context of each case served as its data base. The information source contains transcriptions of the interviews, notes from the interviews, copies of documents and archival material sourced for the study, and tabular material created from these sources. It is from this reference source that the ‘chain of evidence’ that links the research questions, the data collected and the conclusions was drawn (Yin, 2003, p. 105). In analysing this data it was necessary, as Miles and Huberman (cited in Yin, 2003, pp. 110–111) suggested, to create a matrix of categories or themes, placing the evidence collected within them, and developing, as appropriate, flowcharts, tables and frequency tables. It should also be noted that this process of analysis and interpretation involved ‘continual reflection about the data, the asking of analytic questions and the writing of memos’ (Creswell, 2003, p. 190). As regards the process of reflection, the use of what Spiro (cited in Stake, 1994, p. 242) calls ‘criss-crossed reflection’ between data sources was a feature of the analysis undertaken (Harris, 2006).

### Ethics

This research project was approved by UTS HREC: Urban Tourism Program Ethics Approval, clearance number 2006-165P. In terms of the adherence to the ethical standards of conducting research, informed consent was obtained from each prospective interviewee before the interview took place. The participants were informed of the fact that they could, if they chose, withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty or cost. There were no rewards or other incentives offered to respondents for their cooperation. Individual interviews were completed by a member of the research team over a one year period during 2006–07. As a key part of the ethical protocols utilised for this study, each study participant was asked to give their permission for the interview to be tape recorded for later analysis. In addition, confidentiality of all data collected during the study was assured by allocating arbitrary numbers rather than by assigning subject’s names or other data that could have associated subjects with specific information. All data were collected and stored at a secured site to ensure that the confidentiality of the participants was maintained throughout the study process.
Chapter 4

BUSINESS CASE STUDIES

Chapter 3 outlined the research process which employed a simple three stage process. The outcomes of each stage are outlined below.

Stage One – Delphi

This stage engaged the research team’s experience and a selected Delphi group to determine critical components to the research including possible best-practice examples of accessible tourism for inclusion, and key measures to determine successful examples of the accessible tourism best-practice.

The Delphi group identified a number of potential case study businesses based upon a collective experience exceeding 30 years in accessible tourism. This experience covers academia and tourism industry experience. Table 2 identifies the accessible tourism experience, location, ownership structure (business model), tourism segment and area of expertise.

Table 2: Accessible Tourism Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Experience</th>
<th>Location (Home base)</th>
<th>Ownership Structure</th>
<th>Tourism Segment</th>
<th>Expertise Area of Operation</th>
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<tr>
<td>O’Carrollyn’s at One Mile Beach</td>
<td>Port Stephens New South Wales</td>
<td>Sole Trader</td>
<td>Accommodation Eco Resort</td>
<td>Accessible accommodation &amp; destination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakeisde Holiday Park</td>
<td>Sydney, New South Wales</td>
<td>Private company</td>
<td>Accommodation Van park</td>
<td>Accessible accommodation</td>
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<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>Hervey Bay, Queensland</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>Destination experience</td>
<td>Whale watching Quick Cat II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>Ocean Grove, Victoria</td>
<td>Private Company</td>
<td>Licensed Travel Agent</td>
<td>Conducts tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>Perth, Western Australia</td>
<td>Company Limited by Guarantee</td>
<td>Promotion and marketing</td>
<td>Conventions &amp; conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*withheld due to anonymity and confidentiality
Once the prospective operators were identified key measures to determine successful examples of the accessible tourism best practice were developed. These were developed into the Business Case Research Instrument, a copy is contained in Appendix A.

The research identified businesses offering a high standard of accessible tourism product. Key Measures or Indicators were developed and operationalised in a BCI to assist the understanding of what enablers are required for accessible tourism businesses. The research questions were interested in learning about any underlying strategy, issue, reason, thought, initiative or anecdote about the business in respect to the provision of good access.

The following key indicators or key result areas reflect good business practice and meet the components of the Triple Bottom Line concept.

**Financial Report Card**
An organisation’s financial report card focuses on variations to budget, the cash position, profitability, balance sheet structure and viability.

The annual financial report reviews the:
- annual operating performance
- cash management
- debt management
- short term viability of the organisation
- long term viability of the organisation.

**Environmental Report Card**
An organisation’s environment report card considers:
- recycling water and solid waste (paper, cardboard, plastics etc)
- energy conservation
- environmental conservation.

**Social Report Card**
An organisation’s social report card considers:
- enablers, inclusive practices and diversity of experience
- employee and guest/visitor safety
- business support of the community
- community partnerships.

**Stage Two – Fieldwork**
This stage operationalised the Delphi stage together with the case study approach as outlined in the research design. It involved the following actions and initiatives:
- review of management information systems
- in-depth interviews supplemented with e-mails and phone call follow-ups
- in person visits to the identified businesses
- continual reflections about the data
- a process of iteration to develop the case studies from the literature and data collected (Veal, 2006).

The fieldwork process generally followed a similar pattern of telephone contact seeking involvement in the research, followed by e-mail attaching the Business Case Instrument. After a period of time there was a follow-up telephone contact seeking to answer any questions and set a specific date and time for a formal interview. In some cases it took many months from the time of the initial contact to completing the interview. Once complete, the interviews were transcribed and the Business Case Instrument completed.

Several organisations declined to participate for a range of reasons. The following table identifies those businesses and the reasons for non-participation. Notwithstanding the non-participation, several organisations which declined to participate offered valuable input to the process which will be incorporated into the findings in Chapter 5.
Table 3: Organisations which Declined to Participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Operator</th>
<th>Rationale for Non-participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Changing staff profiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Company gone into liquidation after the previous owner had sold the business two years ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Researchers unable to schedule research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>This was a reserve ‘target’, Hervey Bay Whale Watch provides a newer more accessible vessel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>The manager declined to participate after viewing the Business Case Research Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>The proprietor was taken ill and hospitalised for an extended period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*withheld because of anonymity and confidentiality.

Stage Three – Data Analysis and Report Writing

The transcribed interviews were used to compile the BCI to formulate the responses. The following tables summarise the responses to key questions under the Triple Bottom Line concept.

The four main areas covered are:
- Background Information
- Financial Report Card
- Environmental Report Card
- Social Report Card.

Table 4: Background Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Year Commenced Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O’Carrollyn’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>1989–1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>1990 First hol. 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 full time 30 casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Financial Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Finances</th>
<th>Debt %</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O’Carrollyn’s</td>
<td>Prepared to provide</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provided</td>
<td>Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>Not prepared to provide</td>
<td>&gt;75%</td>
<td>Provided</td>
<td>Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>Not prepared to provide</td>
<td>&lt;$100,000</td>
<td>56% ave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>Prepared to provide</td>
<td>&lt;$25%</td>
<td>Not provided</td>
<td>Not provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>Beyond Compliance Initiative $50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 conferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,385 delegates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anticipated Revenue $20M over three years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6: Environmental Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Recycling</th>
<th>Energy Conservation</th>
<th>Limit Greenhouse</th>
<th>Environmental improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O'Carrolly'n's</td>
<td>Attempt to recycle water &amp; solids Composts</td>
<td>Unit design, insulation</td>
<td>Limit washing machine use</td>
<td>Five star energy rating design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limit water usage</td>
<td>Bush fire protected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>Sewerage treatment</td>
<td>Vessel design saves fuel</td>
<td>Stopped smoking onboard 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>Recycling stations around park (Users tend to contaminate them)</td>
<td>Generators, power saving devices Emergency plans Hot water services Energy saving replacement policy</td>
<td>Limit washing machine use</td>
<td>Reclaimed land replanted Landscaped with native vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>Office based but we recycle what we can</td>
<td>Turn off power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use fluorescent lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>PCB employs business practices to minimise environmental impact</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initiatives:</td>
<td>Recycling and Carbon Costed Travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7: Social Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Inclusive Enablers</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Unexpected Outcomes</th>
<th>Community Support/partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O'Carrolly'n's</td>
<td>Units, equipment, vehicle, pool, pathways</td>
<td>OH&amp;S audit</td>
<td>Family/small child friendly</td>
<td>Access committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency plans</td>
<td></td>
<td>Koala Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local operators, Tamboi Queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>Access onto and around vessel</td>
<td>Written safety instructions</td>
<td>Family/small child friendly</td>
<td>Supports geographic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ageing friendly</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>Access Units Access Ensuite in amenities block</td>
<td>OH&amp;S audit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regional NSW Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to lake, rockpool, barbecue</td>
<td>Staff training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caravanners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Signage, security lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Organisational support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Security patrols, proxy access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>Provision of accessible holidays</td>
<td>Safe lifting practices, equipment Mix of staff</td>
<td>Welcoming communities Impact on enjoyability of the trip</td>
<td>Some operators welcome the business, others underestimate the opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>Beyond Compliance initiative had as a stated objective, cultural and community change as it relates to conferences and tourism. PCB supports conferences and organisers where issues are topical or important such as Whaling Conferences; or have direct or indirect benefits to the broader community; or there is a societal demand to support a theme or conference.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tables reflect an overview of the responses to the issues and measures contained in the Business Case Instrument. In addition to the tables, interviewees identified specific instances and examples of their enterprise’s performance against respective measures. Often quotations were offered to support and explain the position. A summary of representative quotes is contained in Appendix B.

The next chapter considers the responses to the BCI questions, develops some findings and identifies areas of further investigation. One primary outcome from the research is the refinement of the Business Case Instrument.
Chapter 5

ANALYSIS

This report focuses specifically on case studies of businesses operating to provide an excellent accessible tourism experience. Those businesses were identified by the Delphi Group and undertook a process of interview and interrogation to complete a series of questions contained in a Business Case Instrument. This chapter analyses the responses offered and concludes with specific findings. The analysis follows the format of the BCI.

Participation Rate

Initially, eleven (11), businesses operating in tourism and considered to provide accessible tourism services were identified. Of those 11, two were not pursued due to logistic difficulties and duplication. The remaining nine were approached to participate in the research. ‘Name Withheld’ did not participate due to timing constraints, ‘Name Withheld’ recently went into liquidation and ‘Name Withheld’ was unable to participate as the proprietor became ill for an extended period and was hospitalised. Finally, ‘Name Withheld’ declined to complete the BCI but did offer some insights to its business background (some quotes are contained in Appendix B).

Of the remaining nine, five businesses fully participated in the research, which is a rate of 55%. The analysis is based on the five full participants.

General, Activities and Area of Operation

This section of the questionnaire was designed to draw out basic or common ground information from all the participating businesses.

General

All the participating business except one (O’Carrollyn’s) were operating during the 1990s and two (Hervey Bay Whale Watch and Perth Convention Bureau) were operating before then.

Activities

Of the businesses participating, all except one (O’Carrollyn’s), or 80%, commenced their access provision over the last decade. Only one business commenced operations to serve a clientele specifically comprising people with disabilities: Leisure Options.

All businesses were demonstrating a social and environmental conscience from beginning their enterprises. That is nearly all businesses were socially and environmentally aware and had become proactive in their field of operation.

The participating businesses are small businesses, employing the proprietor plus casuals. The numbers of employees is significant with employment for 36 full time employees and 30 casuals across four businesses.

All the businesses have a national focus, drawing their custom from a domestic catchment. However all except one reported their businesses as having an international focus.

Financial Report Card Measures

A number of financial indicators were identified in order to achieve two objectives:
- provide a measure of financial well being
- provide a financial statistical measure which achieved the above point but also which protected the enterprise’s commercially sensitive financial data from publication.

The measures were based on real data but sought information on movements between accounting periods or proportional to a base. For example indicators sought included: Depreciation/NIBT as a percentage, Growth in Revenue as a percentage, Growth Net Profit before Tax (NIBT) as a percentage etc. All of the measures are contained in the BCI along with definitions.
Financial Indicators
Of the five participants, three or 60% were prepared to provide financial information. However, of those three, one was a public company which publishes financial information and two have a relationship to the researchers which aided the participants’ degree of trust and comfort in providing the information.

The remaining two, or 40%, declined to provide the financial data sought. They were not comfortable in revealing the data notwithstanding the way in which the ratios were calculated or the explanations given in the BCI concerning privacy and confidentiality. It is concerning to note that ‘Name Withheld’ refused to participate fully as the operators were concerned about their privacy issues.

Investment and Debt Percentage
Financial investment and proportion of debt was sought to gain an insight into the initial financial commitment made by the proprietors, given they are always almost small business operators.

There is no significant pattern to the debt percentage responses; a greater spread of businesses would be required.

Occupancy and Activity
All except one operator were able and willing to provide activity and occupancy data. All revealed substantial and significant growth in activity/occupancy. One, the Perth Convention Bureau, was able to quantify the activity and financial benefit expected to accrue as a result from its access initiative.

Environmental Report Card Measures
The Environmental Report Card (ERC) is a series of indicators which are identified as having specific interest to an organisation in reflecting organisational performance in respect to the environment. The ERC focuses on components such as waste water quality and recycling, recycled solid waste, weed and pest control, greenhouse gas emission reduction, reclamation and conservation projects, all reflecting the enterprises’ impact on the environment.

Recycling
All respondents (100%) had developed policies, strategies and implemented actions to recycle materials relevant to their area of operation. The two accommodation or resort operators conceded that the travelling public’s attitude to recycling ranged from ambivalence to just not caring.

Energy Conservation/Environmental Footprint
Similar to the response under Recycling all operators (100%) had developed responses appropriate to their business operations in respect to energy conservation. However, only one (PCB) had gone so far as to develop the Carbon Costed Travel concept.

Environmental Improvements
The two accommodation or resort participants had spent significant time and effort in restoring and improving their environments. The drivers behind this, based on comments during the interviews, suggest the stance reflects a desire to meet the aspirations of their guests for a natural environment, often specifically involving fauna, ‘critters and koalas’.

Social Report Card Measures
The Social Report Card (SRC) is a series of indicators which are identified as having specific interest to an organisation in reflecting organisational performance in respect to various social elements. The SRC focuses on components such as inclusive access practices, employee safety, workplace stability, community support, involving the community, community works and partnerships all reflecting the enterprises’ impact on society and local community.

Inclusive Practices
All operators have provided access provisions to the basic components of their facilities. For example the accommodation providers had developed accessible accommodation, but then gone further and developed access to their full facility, such as access to a rockpool, barbecues and a vehicle facilitating trips to the beach.
DEVELOPING A BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

Safety
All participants had employee and visitor/guest safety as a high priority. They implemented the following:

- OH&S audits and training
- emergency plans
- written safety instructions
- signage, security lighting
- security patrols, proxy access
- safe lifting practices, equipment
- mix of staff in situations.

Unexpected Outcomes
Often the provision of access designed to facilitate participation of people with disabilities resulted in unexpected outcomes. The two accommodation providers independently identified as an unexpected outcome that their premises were patronised by families, particularly those with small children. They also notice their facilities were popular with members of the ageing population.

Leisure Options noted that a welcoming community added significant value to the amenity and enjoyability of a holiday, particularly if the access in the community was not perfect.

Community Support/Partnerships
Each of the operators (80%) noted that over time they developed relationships with community groups and organisations, often to financial benefit of the business. Support of community groups by the enterprise was usually focused on its geographic area of interest.

The following organisational contacts were identified in the research:

- Access committee
- Koala Foundation
- Local tour operators—Tamboi Queen
- Local Government—acceptance, support and involvement was sometimes patchy
- Regional NSW groups
- Caravanners
- organisational support from disability groups.

Findings
The research group was interested in learning about any underlying strategy or initiative about the business in respect to the provision of good access. It was also focused on identifying key enablers or result areas typical of businesses providing a quality accessible visitor experience in tourism. The findings which were drawn from the outcome of the research reflect these goals. It is acknowledged that the original sample of eleven participants, which became five or six depending upon the degree of participation, is not a significant sample from which to draw immutable conclusions. However, this research is a scoping study only and therefore the findings are relevant to directing the future course of research in the area.

- The transport sector is a major and key component in tourism, and particularly, accessible tourism. The sector did not contribute a representative or meaningful component to the research. Three key industry players were approached but none were able to participate. Australia’s largest accessible vehicle hire business went into liquidation during this project. It had been operating successfully for a decade but was sold a few years ago. Research into the demise of the company would be expected to yield important information to the accessible tourism industry.

- Businesses providing a quality accessible experience are mature businesses they tend to have been in operation for about a decade beforecommencing their ‘access activities’.

- Businesses providing a quality accessible experience are drawing their business from a Domestic and International market.

- Businesses are reluctant to provide financial data. One business was reluctant to provide any information; ‘Name Withheld’. This seems to be the case notwithstanding the protections built into the
DEVELOPING A BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

- Businesses providing a quality accessible experience demonstrate there is a market in accessible tourism and that market adds to their activity/occupancy. Financial data provided indicates economic reasons for providing access to tourism product.

- All businesses demonstrated a high level of environmental responsibility. Elements like recycling, environment rehabilitation and water conservation featured strongly.

- The businesses had developed inclusive practices but gone beyond the basic access requirements, for example, as required by the Australian Standards for Access, and developed inclusive experiences.

- All businesses met their safety obligations and often went further, ensuring the safety of guests with disabilities.

- Businesses were surprised that other groups patronised the accessible features, particularly as it relates to accommodation.

- Most businesses developed relationships in respect to their access provision with community and regional groups and organisations.
Chapter 6

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The use of Business Cases for accessible tourism is an underdeveloped area in Australia, with one instance of identifying business cases in accessible tourism available: ‘The Tourism Challenge: Access for All’ (Office of National Tourism, 1998) and this has only provided an overview of the businesses. There is a perception that accessible tourism is ‘low yield’ due to a stereotype that people with disabilities have significantly less disposable income and are more likely to be dependent on a government pension. This has often been raised as a deterrent to investment in accessible tourism. Unfortunately, this view has also affected government tourism marketing authorities, who on the whole have not responded to their responsibilities of providing equitable access to tourism experiences.

Until examples of good business practice are identified and promoted, the industry cannot be guided with any certainty as to the benefits in providing expanded accessible tourism products. This research project attempted to add additional information about Business Cases offering a good accessible product. Key Measures or Indicators were to be developed and operationalised to assist the understanding of what enablers are required for accessible tourism businesses. The insights provided by the analysis will be used to promote the benefits of accessible tourism product provision to the tourism industry. The industry will be better informed and better able to plan for delivery of accessible tourism product.

While the number of businesses included in this research is small, this project is a scoping study designed to point the way to additional research which would expand upon the key measures identified as important and informative. Future research directions are bullet pointed, following the conclusion. The Delphi group identified the participant businesses as offering a high degree of accessible tourism experience. The sample was developed across tourism sectors, ownership structures and geographic location. However, the transport sector, which is a major component in accessible tourism, did not contribute a component to the research. The research found that those businesses exhibited several key and common features:

- The business is mature, operating for in excess of 10 years
- The businesses go beyond minimum or legislated requirements in respect to access and safety.
- The businesses all demonstrated a high degree of environmental awareness and activity, which resulted in outcomes like substantial recycling and reclamation work.
- Most businesses had developed strong relationships with community and regional groups which often benefited the local community as a whole.
- Most were surprised that other market segments were attracted to their business due to the access provision.
- All had a national catchment and most benefited from an international demand.
- All benefited substantially in activity and occupancy from the provision of an accessible tourism experience but were reluctant to provide financial data to support the case.

On closer analysis of each of the accessible tourism case studies presented in this report, the simple truth behind the push for change (regardless of the philosophical alignment or theory involved) is that in each case, the operator has recognised that they needed to cope with a new and dynamic business environment which necessitated them to rethink how and why they do business (Department for Works and Pensions, 2008). As such, the case studies serve to highlight innovation—such initiatives pivot intrinsically on motivated individuals, within a supportive culture, informed by a broad sense of the future (Tourism Victoria, 2008). Importantly however the case studies also serve to bring due attention to those operations that have recognised the philosophical importance of accessible tourism, and its value to them as a business entity. As such, the case studies serve to emphasise for all the fact that sustainability (in its broadest sense) and prudent governance must go hand-in-hand with other more commonly accepted business practices if a tourism operator, be they large or small, is to succeed (and prosper) in today’s highly competitive business environment.
Future Research

Future research opportunities are numbered below:

1. Transport sector in accessible tourism. This would include research into the sector as well as research into the company that went into liquidation during the research timeframe.

2. Developing an expanded and detailed financial analysis of those businesses which were prepared to provide financial data. The recognition of the importance of further research in this area is also recognition of the limited success that this project had with obtaining detailed financial information.

3. Businesses providing a quality accessible experience are drawing their business from an International market. Research offering a detailed analysis/breakdown.

4. More defined sectoral analysis ensuring the benefits to each sector (Transport, Accommodation, Experience/Activities).

5. Financial information remains a key component of the research and some method of satisfying participants their commercially sensitive base financial data must be found to enable future research.

Key Measures

The measures identified as signifiers in this research are found to be:

- business operating period
- degree to which the business provides an inclusive access experience
- businesses demonstrating a high degree of environmental awareness, which may also be a consequence of a broader understanding of universal design principles
- the business did not seek to meet the ‘minimum requirements’ in respect to safety of guests/visitors and staff
- developed strong collaborative relationships with other businesses and community groups who have similar philosophies
- targeting a broader national and international market.

These key measures have been incorporated into a modified Business Case Instrument, contained in Appendix A.
APPENDIX A: Business Case Research Instrument, Modified

Developing a Business Case for Accessible Tourism

University of Technology, Sydney
Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia
University of Queensland
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Ethics, Anonymity and Confidentiality

The approach of the Universities undertaking this project to ethics in research assures all participants of anonymity and that any information disclosed will be treated in a confidential manner and only used for the purpose of the research. However, case study participants may wish to give their permission to be expressly identified within the case study research and to subsequent publications.

You have been chosen as a possible participant in this research as an example of a successful business offering best practice accessible tourism experiences. Accordingly, there may be a tangible benefit to your organisation being named. For example, apart from academic publications, opportunities exist to publicise the case studies to regional, state, national and international accessible tourism audiences, which may result in increased business opportunities. Further, the case study itself may provide a foundation on which to complete an application for the State and National Tourism Awards.

The nature of the case study research is just as useful as an anonymous case where the organisation name can be withheld. Either way, we encourage you to be involved as your business has been identified as a business that others could learn significantly from and, therefore, provide excellent accessible tourism experiences.

With regard to the confidentiality of the information supplied, we recognise that it is up to the organisation to disclose information that they are commercially comfortable with and any information that they are not commercially comfortable disclosing should not be disclosed.

Any commercially sensitive information shared with the researchers will:

- be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed to any third party without written permission;
- only be used for the specific purpose of research, preparing the data sought in accordance with this document and writing the research report and subsequent reports; and
- be returned on request.

This work is exploratory in nature and while we are drawing on the best available literature to determine a business case for accessible tourism, we are bringing an open mind and trying to think laterally about the benefits derived from providing accessible tourism experiences. This may be economic, financial, social/cultural or environmental.

With regard to source financial information including Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss Statements, Cash Flow Statements, Trial Balance Statements and any other financial information, we are endeavouring to employ ratios, financial and management indicators that will convey this information in a ‘non-disclosing’ fashion.

We hope by being involved in the research that you may come to understand your business in ways that you have not previously considered.

The project has been approved by the UTS Human Research Ethics Committee (Ref No. 2006-165) and any ethical issues arising from the research can be discussed with the UTS Research Ethics Manager Ms Susanna Gorman on Ph: (02) 9514-1279.
Definitions

**Access Occupancy**
Calculated in the same manner as average occupancy, but specifically for the access room.

**Accessible Tourism**
Is a process of enabling people with disabilities and seniors to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universal tourism products, services and environments (adapted from OCA (1999)). The definition is inclusive of the mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access (Darcy, 2005).

**Average Occupancy**
Refers the number of room nights the room was sold, divided by the number of room nights that room was available to be sold over a given period, such as a year. Usually expressed as a percentage.

**Continuous Pathway**
A continuous pathway is an uninterrupted path of travel to or within a building providing access to all required facilities. Note: For non-ambulatory people, this accessible path does not incorporate any step, stairwell or turnstile, revolving door, escalator or other impediment, which would prevent it being negotiated by people with a disability (Standards Australia, 2001: 8).

**Dedicated Access**
The marketing and advertising expense relating to the access.

**Marketing Expense**
Tourism market. The ratio is calculated by the Dedicated Access Marketing Expense, divided by the Total Marketing and Advertising Expense, usually expressed as a percentage.

**Depreciation/NIBT**
Depreciation Expense, divided by Net Income Before Tax, expressed as a percentage.

**Disability**
Is defined as a complex set of social relationships imposed on top of a person’s impairment due to the way society is organised. Hence, disability is the product of the social relationships that produce disabling barriers and hostile social attitudes that exclude, segregate and oppress people with disabilities and deny them their rights of citizenship. The social model regards disability as the product of the social, economic and political relationships (the social relations) rather than locating it as the fault of an individual’s embodiment. This approach to disability separates impairment from the social relations of disability (Oliver, 1990 [cited in (Darcy, 2004: 10)])

**Domestic Tourism**
The proportion of patronisation by people from Australia against total patronisation.

**Equity to Total Assets**
The ratio calculated as the dollar value of Total Equity (or Shareholders Funds) divided by the dollar value of Total Assets.

**Growth**
The percentage change from one year to the next, for example (year two – year one)/year one, (year three – year two)/year two. Usually expressed as a percentage.

**Growth in Revenue**
See Growth

**Growth Net Profit**
See Growth Before Tax (NIBT)

**Interest Expense/NIBT**
Interest Expense divided by Net Income Before Tax, expressed as a percentage.

**Key Indicators**
Or Key Result Areas are signifiers of the provision of good access. For example one would expect the tour operator who provides an accessible product and good customer service would have a higher patronage, higher dollar turnover, higher level of profitability, higher net profit before tax, higher marketing and advertising expenditure, greatest social inclusion, strong relationship with the community, high degree of environmental responsibility etc. when compared to the tour operator not providing an accessible product or service.

**Key Result Areas**
Refer to Key Indicators

**Low Yield**
Represents a lesser or lower usage of an accessible product when compared to the generic travelling population, which in turn results in a lower return on investment for that particular facility. For example, a lower yield may result from a lower occupancy of an accessible motel room.

**M&A Exp/Total Income**
Marketing and Advertising Expense divided by Total Income, expressed as a percentage.
Off Peak Tourism
That proportion of total patronisation during the periods of the year, which are off the peak or not high season for the business.

Triple Bottom Line (TBL)

Universal design
Is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialised design … The intent of the universal design concept is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by more people at little or no extra cost. The universal design concept targets all people of all ages, sizes and abilities. (Center for Universal Design, 2003)

(The title of the book comes from a question posed by Polish poet Stanislaw Lec, 'Is it progress if a cannibal uses a fork?')
Introduction

Business Cases for accessible tourism are underdeveloped in Australia. There has been only one instance of information provision to the supply side of tourism identifying business cases in accessible tourism (The Tourism Challenge: Access for All, Department of Industry Science Tourism, 1997) and this only provided an overview of the businesses. Until examples of good business practice are identified and promoted, the industry cannot be guided with any certainty as to the benefits in providing expanded accessible tourism products. This research project attempts to add additional information about Business Cases offering a good accessible product. A detailed explanation is provided in Appendix 1.

In the accommodation sector, many accommodation providers have not identified the benefits of accessible product provision and some have anecdotally stated that the ‘disabled rooms’ are a liability to their overall business. There is a perception that the accessible tourism market is ‘low yield’ due to a stereotype that people with disabilities and seniors have significantly less disposable income and are significantly more likely to be dependent on a government pension. This has often been raised as a deterrent to investment in accessible tourism. Unfortunately, this view has also affected government tourism marketing authorities, who in the whole have not responded to their responsibilities of providing equitable access to tourism experiences.

This research addresses that preconception, demonstrating that the provision of good access tourism infrastructure, products and services can indeed have a positive impact not just on business but also on society and the environment. The ‘Triple Bottom Line’ approach to tourism has been widely used to provide a broader understanding of this economic, social and environmental phenomenon. The research will identify businesses offering a high standard of accessible tourism product. Key Measures or Indicators will be developed and operationalised to assist the understanding of what enablers are required for accessible tourism businesses.

The research is interested in learning about any underlying strategy, issue, reason, thought, initiative or anecdote about the business in respect to the provision of good access. For example, it may involve the initial reason for establishing the business or developing the access in a certain direction. The research team will seek and ask about any such elements during the interview phase. However, a general question has been included for most sections, designed to start you thinking about such key elements.

The insights provided by analysis will be used to promote the benefits of accessible tourism product provision to the tourism industry. The industry will be better-informed and better able to plan for delivery of accessible tourism product.

The research is being undertaken by the University of Technology, Sydney, Curtin University of Technology, WA and the University of Queensland and funded by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC).

Objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

- develop the key indicators or key result areas to measure the business, social and environmental case
- identify at least six to eight examples of ‘best practice’ in delivery of accessible tourism product
- document the business case for accessible tourism
- use innovative methods of information presentation to present the measured information
- disseminate the case studies to industry to demonstrate the benefits to the Triple Bottom Line for the provision of inclusive tourism practices.

Research Methodology

The research project will initially draw upon the knowledge base of the researchers, the industry reference group and a Delphi group to brainstorm and snowball to identify tourism operators providing accessible tourism experiences within the following parameters:

- a number of states of Australia
- varying sized businesses
- a range of tourism industry sectors
• differing ownership structures
• achieving a positive outcome in at least one of the parts of the Triple Bottom Line.

A more general online questionnaire of people with disabilities will seek to identify tourism operators who provide good-quality accessible tourism experiences. This will assist to validate the Delphi selection and provide a future list of other businesses further propose research in this area. The literature and expertise of the group will be used to develop a semi-structured interview checklist on which to collect the data. The semi-structured interview checklist (part of this document) will be forwarded to identified businesses who have verbally agreed to be involved in the research. The research will apply a common in-depth interview and participant observation to each business. Due to businesses being drawn from different sectors of the tourism industry, the research team will explore different approaches and methods as appropriate to the sector business case study. The research will then identify Key Indicators or Key Result Areas which reflect best business practice in accessible tourism.

**Triple Bottom Line (TBL)**

The concept of the Triple Bottom Line was described by author and management consultant, John Elkington, as a concept that embraces sustainability of environmental, social and economic issues reflecting stakeholder and societal concerns. Importantly, these extend beyond the purely financial bottom line. Triple Bottom Line is a way for business to demonstrate its accountability to society and shareholders and can be employed as a vehicle to achieve sustainable development, as this goal is reliant upon compatible environmental, economic and social outcomes. Sustainable business requires the integration of these three concepts. TBL is regarded as a reporting device and an approach to decision-making, which employs reporting tools to understand the economic, environmental and social implications of decisions for organisational activities (a reference list can be supplied on request).

Report Cards are one reporting tool employed by organisations using the TBL approach to information provision. For the purposes of this research we have developed a series of elements for each of the three Report Cards:

- Financial/Business
- Environmental
- Social.

**Financial Report Card**

An organisation’s financial report card focuses on occupancy, activity, variations to budget, the cash position, profitability, balance sheet structure and viability. Depending upon the business ownership structure, Public or Private (including sole trader and partnership), the availability of financial information will be limited. Appendix 1 contains an expanded Financial Report Card which could be utilised when the business is a public company which publishes its financial information.

The annual financial report reviews:
- annual operating performance
- cash management
- debt management
- short term viability of the organisation
- long term viability of the organisation.

**Environmental Report Card**

An organisation’s environment report card considers:
- recycling water, and solid waste (paper, cardboard, plastics etc)
- energy conservation
- environmental conservation.
Social Report Card
An organisation’s social report card considers:
- enablers, inclusive practices and diversity of experience
- employee and guest/visitor safety
- business’s support of the community
- community partnerships.

Photographs
High resolution pictures of your business activity involving participation of people with disabilities, seniors and their families and friends will greatly add to the effectiveness of the message this research is trying to convey. Photos of the business infrastructure that may have been based on universal design principles, adaptations or modifications, or consistency with the Building Codes of Australia called upon Australian Standards for access and mobility (AS1428) would be beneficial. Providing us with photos for use in the report and publicity would be appreciated and copyright would remain with your organisation.
Business Case Research Questions

An overview of the semi structured in-depth interview checklist is now provided. While it would be appreciated if you could read through the document prior to meeting and have any documents available that you think would be of assistance, the research team will largely collect this information through the in-depth interview. Not all of the following questions or sections are relevant to all organisations and do not feel as if answers have to be given for all sections. The research is explorative and the research team will assist you to understand any of the areas that may not be clear from the checklist.

1. General

Business Name:

Business Address:
Street No & Name
Suburb/Area/Town
State & Postcode

Contact Details:
Phone
Fax
Email
Web site

Business Description Summary (approx 100 words):

Year Commenced Operation:

Year Commenced Activities Accessible:

Social:

Environmental:
Business Structure (circle one):
Sole Trader  Partnership  Private Company  Public Company

Number of employees when commenced operation:
Number of employees  Current:

Area of Operation/Customer Catchment

A. Local
B. Regional (intrastate)
C. Interstate
D. National
E. International (probe for details).

General
Why did you get into this business? Was there a specific strategy behind developing the business and its accessibility features?

2. **Financial Report Card Questions**

2.1 What was the initial investment in establishing the business (circle one)?
A. Less than $100,000
B. Between $100,000 and $500,000
C. Between $500,000 and $1,000,000
D. Greater than $1,000,000

2.2 What proportion of this investment was financed by Debt (borrowings) (circle one)?
A. Less than 25%
B. Between 25% and 50%
C. Between 50% and 75%
D. Greater than 75%

2.3 Occupancy and Activity Questions relating to patronage of Accommodation or Business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3.1 Occupancy (Accommodation)</th>
<th>As at</th>
<th>As at</th>
<th>As at</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 June 06</td>
<td>30 June 04</td>
<td>30 June 05</td>
<td>30 June 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the Average Occupancy for the premises over the three year period</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss management information systems/observation of the group visitation dynamics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the premise visited by groups of people with disabilities? If so, are you able to provide any details of these groups?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.3.2 Activity (e.g. attraction)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the change in total numbers of people? (i.e. growth) experiencing the activity:</th>
<th>As at 30 June 04</th>
<th>As at 30 June 05</th>
<th>As at 30 June 06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Discuss management information systems/observation of the group visitation dynamics
- Is the premise visited by groups of people with disabilities? If so, are you able to provide any details of these groups?

### 2.4 General information about access

Were there any financial imperatives, or strategies or are there any unexpected financial outcomes which you believe may have been derived from the provision of accessibility?

### 3. Environmental Report Card Questions

Initiatives the business employs to limit environmental impacts. Often the inclusion of good access means a focus on good design, which results in unanticipated positive outcomes. What initiatives does the business benefit from, in respect to:

#### 3.1 Recycling water and solid waste

Describe initiatives to recycle (water, paper, cardboard, plastics etc). Can you measure the amount of material recycled?

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3.2 Energy Conservation
Describe any initiatives adopted re energy conservation. What was the amount of energy consumed for the last three years—gas and electricity?
3.4 Limit greenhouse gas emission
Describe initiatives to limit greenhouse gas emissions, for example, encouraging guests to reuse towels

3.5 Initiatives to conserve/improve the environment
Describe initiatives and actions adopted to conserve environments and reclaim lost environments, for example, regenerating bushland, installing water runoff controls etc.

3.6 General Information
What strategy, initiative or event can you relate which assists explain the rationale behind the direction taken with the business? For example were there any specific inputs or have there been any unexpected outcomes?
4. Social Report Card Questions
Initiatives the business employs can result in positive social impacts. Often the inclusion of good access means a focus on good design which results in unanticipated positive outcomes, for example, good access design can eliminate/reduce the need for staff to lift heavy objects, clear signage communicates across cultural and language barriers. Does the business benefit society by initiatives developed to meet the needs of people with a disability?

4.1 Enablers, inclusive practice and diversity of experience
Describe how the business offers inclusion, for example the number of accessible rooms/units vs. the total number available or steps taken to include people with disabilities/seniors e.g. pricing policy.

4.2 Safety of employees, guests and visitors
Describe initiatives such as OHS initiatives, contrast nosing’s on stairs, hand rails, non slip surfaces, night lighting, good design eliminating risks for example, installation of a lifting device for people using wheelchairs meant staff no longer had to carry certain heavy/awkward objects.

4.3 Unexpected use of the access feature/facility can result in additional income stream
Describe initiative/event, for example, making a place accessible to wheelchair users could encourage families with prams.
4.4 Business support of the community, and result from provision of access
Describe community outcome/initiative and outcome:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4.5 Community partnerships and development can occur following increased awareness (services, facilities)
Describe initiatives, for example, local council repairing kerb crossovers, increased number of access parking spaces, new businesses offering improved access.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4.6 General Information
What strategy, initiative or event can you relate which assists explain the rationale behind the direction taken with the business as it relates to community involvement? For example were there any specific inputs or have there been any unexpected outcomes?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation!
Financial Report Card – Public Organisations

2. Financial Report Card Questions

2.1 What was the initial investment in establishing the business (circle one)?
A. Less than $100,000
B. Between $100,000 and $500,000
C. Between $500,000 and $1,000,000
D. Greater than $1,000,000

2.2 What proportion of this investment was financed by Debt (borrowings) (circle one)?
A. Less than 25%
B. Between 25% and 50%
C. Between 50% and 75%
D. Greater than 75%

2.3 Occupancy and Activity Questions relating to patronage of Accommodation or Business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3.1 Occupancy (Accommodation)</th>
<th>As at 30 June 04</th>
<th>As at 30 June 05</th>
<th>As at 30 June 06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the Average Occupancy for the premises over the three year period:</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the Average Occupancy as it relates to the stock of Accessible Rooms:</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What proportion of the Access Occupancy relates to Domestic tourism?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What proportion of the Access Occupancy Occurs in non-Peak?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss management information systems/observation of the group visitation dynamics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the premise visited by groups of people with disabilities? If so, are you able to provide any details of these groups?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2.3.2 Activity (e.g. attraction)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>As at 30 June 04</th>
<th>As at 30 June 05</th>
<th>As at 30 June 06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the change in total numbers of people? (i.e. growth) experiencing the activity?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the proportion of visitors seeking access compared to the total numbers of visitors?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What proportion of the visitors seeking access relates to Domestic tourism?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What proportion of the visitors seeking access relates to non Peak tourism?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discuss management information systems/observation of the group visitation dynamics

Is the premise visited by groups of people with disabilities? If so, are you able to provide any details of these groups?

## 2.4 Balance Sheet Questions (relates to the last three financial years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>As at 30 June 04</th>
<th>As at 30 June 05</th>
<th>As at 30 June 06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratios:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity to Total Assets</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets to Total Assets</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Liabilities to Total Liabilities</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained Earnings to Total Equity</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2.5 Profitability Questions
(relates to the last three financial years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>As at 30 June 04*</th>
<th>As at 30 June 05**</th>
<th>As at 30 June 06***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What has been the Growth in Revenue</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in Net Profit before Tax (NIBT)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Proportion is Interest to NIBT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Proportion is Depreciation to NIBT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the proportion of Marketing and Advertising expense to Total Income</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What proportion of the M&amp;A Expense applies to the accessible product</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
* See Definitions Growth in Revenue
** See Definitions Growth in Net Profit before Tax (NIBT)
*** See Definitions Interest Expense/NIBT

### 2.6 General information about access
Were there any financial imperatives, or strategies or are there any unexpected financial outcomes which you believe may have been derived from the provision of accessibility?
# APPENDIX B: SELECTED QUOTES FROM INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Strategy</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>O’Carrollyn’s</strong></td>
<td>The philosophical approach is to have as many strings to your bow as possible. I think it’s stupid to build something brand new that’s got steps. When designing O’Carrollyn’s, I thought it’s a good idea to make them (cabins) wheelchair accessible, I thought I’d better make sure the bathrooms are accessible as well. That was a good idea. Then I thought I’d better turn some of the bathrooms around so there’s left and right hand bathrooms. I thought it would provide more options and my market would be bigger and that was the whole plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Name Withheld’</strong></td>
<td>... my thinking was that people were getting older anyway, so ‘access’ to me was not necessarily just wheelchairs. Also, our populations’ getting older, and if you don’t provide access for them then there’s a lot of stuff they can’t do ... So we put access in to all the bedrooms, bathrooms, etc. Just to have a shower was a major drama but once we put in those access areas ... just interesting things like handrails and stuff it made ... life so much easier, so that was something that was in my mind before we even started ... in fact, I wasn’t even aware that I had to put in disabled facilities when we first looked at it, because of the local authority here. All along I intended to do that; it had nothing to do with ‘having’ to do it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lakeside Holiday Park</strong></td>
<td>There’s no strategy to access, it's a necessity to have disabled access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure Options</strong></td>
<td>I was doing social research, a number of needs studies, community needs studies, a couple of agencies who work for people with disability asked me to do recreation reviews or look at the needs of their client group, and one of the needs ... was that there was a big need for holidays for people with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perth Convention Bureau</strong></td>
<td>The PCB markets Western Australia nationally and internationally as a destination for conventions, exhibitions and incentive travel groups. It operates as a non-profit organisation representing the interests of fee-paying members with significant support from Tourism Western Australia and the City of Perth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## General Information about Access

|  |
|-------------------|---|
| **O’Carrollyn’s** | Being accessible is a hell of a lot of fun. |
| **Hervey Bay Whale Watch** | The biggest kick we now get, since designing and building one of our vessels for wheelchair access, is to get people on board who wouldn’t normally be able to go whale watching. |
| **Lakeside Holiday Park** | Financial questions, no, there were no commercial imperatives to providing access. |
| **Leisure Options** | The business has had to, over the years, be really clear about its products (holidays), clients’ different ability levels, and expectations. |
| **Perth Convention Bureau** | Beyond Compliance encourages tourism operators in Western Australia to recognise the disability sector as a growing tourism market and subsequently provide universally accessible services to allow people with a disability and their carers and families to access and enjoy the stunning assets of Western Australia as a tourist destination for both business and leisure travellers. |
### Financial Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Name Withheld’</th>
<th>I’m not prepared to give out any personal information anymore. I don’t mind talking to you about what we’ve done here and all that, but in terms of selling out information, particularly this stuff, no chance, no chance in hell.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O’Carrollyn’s</td>
<td>I didn’t realise the market was that big. A lot of people told me I was wasting my time and I don’t know whether I believed them or not but I always knew there was something there, just that I didn’t realise it was that big.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>We get small groups which are anything from two to twelve and in that group will be one or two wheelchairs we have mentally handicapped and they all have carers in terms of pricing we have an adult concession and carers pricing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>We run at a 56% occupancy. Occupancy figures for access is not tracked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>Now, it’s a different question now, do I have final expectations? Absolutely, we’ll cancel things that don’t at least cover the costs. In the past we actually ran holidays at a loss, we now try and cover all our administrative costs, we now expect to get a profit. I take responsibility for that. It’s a profit per trip ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>As at February 2006, the Beyond Compliance initiative had lead to 18 national or international conferences being confirmed for Western Australia, translating to 10,385 delegates coming to the state for the purpose of a disability related conference with an expected expenditure of nearly $20 million over the next three years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Environmental Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O’Carrollyn’s</th>
<th>Not a great deal you can do because people on holidays don’t care, they just throw all their garbage in the recycle bin they don’t care. Over 60% of people do that. In particular overseas people don’t even know. So recycling can become a waste of time. I still do it but it is difficult.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td>.... I suppose we were out fishing when we found whales and then realised how the whole environmental thing worked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td>In terms of the environment, 38 acres were planted 99% native in the time we’ve been here. It’s all landscaped garden here and we’ve planted the lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td>We reuse as much as possible, we recycle things like paper, you know, like we’re talking office stuff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td>PCB created a committee to establish and monitor environmental impacts and outcomes across the organisation to ensure it is carbon neutral. For example, policies include Recycling and Carbon Costed Travel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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44
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Report Card</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O’Carrolly’s</td>
<td><em>I started to develop facilities that local community groups could come and use. Now we get Probus Clubs, car clubs, and others that book the facilities on a Sunday or mid week day afternoon when it’s not so busy, never on school holidays for example, and they book ahead.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay Whale Watch</td>
<td><em>We provide tickets to all the local schools for their fates. We donate to different activities throughout the year for example local fishing competition. We tried to do it solely within our local area and not so much out of the area that area includes Harvey Bay Maryborough Bundaberg and a bit west.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Holiday Park</td>
<td><em>We don’t get much support out of the local community. The council is not supportive of tourism, we don’t even have an information bureau on the northern beaches. They’re reluctant to advertise what we do here, support is minimal.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Options</td>
<td><em>The local traders were incredibly welcoming and supportive because they know how much money people are spending, the restaurants love us, the hotels love us, it’s welcoming ... just feeling generally welcome in a town.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth Convention Bureau</td>
<td><em>PCB supports conferences and organisers where issues are topical or important such as Whaling Conferences, or have direct or indirect benefits to the broader community.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003) *Disability, aging and carers, Australia: summary of findings* (Catalogue No.4430.0), Catalogue No.4430.0, Canberra: ABS.


DEVELOPING A BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM


AUTHORS

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Dr Simon Darcy is an Associate Professor and Research Director in the School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism at the University of Technology, Sydney. Simon’s research and teaching expertise is in sport, tourism and diversity management. He has been the recipient of Australian Research Council, Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre and United Nations research grants and is currently investigating organisational responses to accessible tourism, sports management practices and protected area visitor management systems. All Simon’s research is industry linked with the private sector, third sector or government organisations. His body of work on accessible tourism over the last decade has gained national and international recognition. Simon has been actively involved in changing tourism practice through his positions as a board member of Nican, a member of the Commonwealth Government’s Office of National Tourism’s Steering Committee on accessible tourism and a member of the NSW Transport Minister’s Accessible Public Transport Forum. Simon is professionally accredited with the Planning Institute of Australia and the Association of Consultants in Access Australia.
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Bruce has a spinal injury following a swimming accident in 1976 and uses a manual wheelchair for his mobility. He has a Bachelor of Economics Degree (1980) and Post Graduate Diploma of Data Processing (1981). He has worked in Corporate Finance during the 1980s while he achieved Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) status (1986). Following an extended trip to the United Kingdom and Europe in 1992, he left the finance industry to research, write and publish Easy Access Australia, Australia’s only travel guide for people with a disability. He has published two editions of EAA (1995 and 2000) and published two editions of Accessing Melbourne (2001 and 2006). He is active in promoting the concept of ‘Accessible Tourism’ having spoken at the Prime Ministers Gold Medal Access Awards (1999), several conferences and appeared on numerous television and radio programs. He also represented Tourism New South Wales at the Disability with Attitude Conference Feb 2001. Until May 2001, Bruce was an Executive Committee Member of Travellers Aid Society, a charitable group based in Melbourne providing a range of services to stranded travellers and people with disabilities. He has written many travel articles for the disability and generic press and contributed to Lonely Planet travel guides to Australia, (1994–2000) and The Rough Guides, published in the United Kingdom (1994–1996). Bruce is passionate about accessible travel and works as a consultant to the travel industry and is an Accredited Member of the Association of Consultants in Access Australia.
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Shane Pegg is a Senior Lecturer with the School of Tourism and Leisure Management in the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law at The University of Queensland. Shane is a past recipient of the Future Scholars Award from the Academy of Leisure Sciences, and a current member of the World Leisure Commission on Access and Inclusion. He has been involved in a wide array of research projects related to service evaluation, therapeutic recreation, tourism access and inclusion issues, and the tourism and leisure behaviour of people with disabilities. More recently, this has included a study of the links between leisure boredom, alcohol use and levels of self determination of rural and urban youth in Australia, the risk-taking behaviour of Gold Coast Schoolies Week participants and the effective management of such tourism events, satisfaction with volunteer engagement in community events, as well as an investigation of the key motivators for engagement of young adults in sport tourism.
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Professor Tanya Packer
A Canadian occupational therapy scholar, Tanya Packer is Professor of Occupational and Director of the Centre for Research into Disability and Society at Curtin University of Technology. Her career has spanned several continents and areas of expertise. In all cases, the participation of people with disabilities and/or chronic conditions in everyday life has been the focus. Approaching ‘participation’ as the goal for people with disabilities and the specific focus of her research has resulted in innovative approaches that find solutions in environmental change, policy change, health care reform and client-centred practice. Her work in accessible tourism is one example. Her research in Hong Kong and now Australia, has highlighted the complexity of
DEVELOPING A BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

travelling with a disability and is aimed at assisting the tourism sector to provide equitable service while increasing their own market share. Together with students she has contributed to such initiatives as ‘You’re Welcome’, a project to increase community understanding and access to local shops, businesses and attractions. She has recently served on the Western Australian Accessible Tourism Task Force, jointly convened by Tourism Western Australia and the Disability Services Commission. Professor Packer is the author or co-author of numerous peer reviewed journal and conference presentations, three self-management protocols, and seven training manuals. Her work has been published in Clinical Biomechanics, Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, International Journal of Rehabilitation Research, and Tourism Management to name a few.
EC3, a wholly-owned commercialisation company, takes the outcomes from the relevant STCRC research; develops them for market; and delivers them to industry as products and services. EC3 delivers significant benefits to the STCRC through the provision of a wide range of business services both nationally and internationally.

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- Qantas
- Tourism Queensland
- Department of Tourism
- Tourism NT
- Tourism Tasmania
- Tourism Australia
- Australian Tourism Export Council

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The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) is established under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Program. STCRC is the world’s leading scientific institution delivering research to support the sustainability of travel and tourism — one of the world’s largest and fastest growing industries.

Introduction
The STCRC has grown to be the largest, dedicated tourism research organisation in the world, with $187 million invested in tourism research programs, commercialisation and education since 1997.

The STCRC was established in July 2003 under the Commonwealth Government’s CRC program and is an extension of the previous Tourism CRC, which operated from 1997 to 2003.

Role and responsibilities
The Commonwealth CRC program aims to turn research outcomes into successful new products, services and technologies. This enables Australian industries to be more efficient, productive and competitive.

The program emphasises collaboration between businesses and researchers to maximise the benefits of research through utilisation, commercialisation and technology transfer. An education component focuses on producing graduates with skills relevant to industry needs.

STCRC’s objectives are to enhance:

- the contribution of long-term scientific and technological research and innovation to Australia’s sustainable economic and social development;
- the transfer of research outputs into outcomes of economic, environmental or social benefit to Australia;
- the value of graduate researchers to Australia;
- collaboration among researchers, between researchers and industry or other users; and efficiency in the use of intellectual and other research outcomes.