

Understanding the Connector Market: How does Queensland's Outback fit with Connectors' ideal domestic holiday?

Research conducted via focus groups and an online survey with Connectors within 400km of Queensland's Outback plus a boost sample of Brisbane Connectors. For further information please contact: Research@tq.com.au

The Overlap between Connectors' holiday needs and wants and what they perceive Queensland's Outback offer:

Activities and attractions preferred by Connectors on their ideal holiday include: hiking, bushwalking, general sight seeing and day trips. Generally speaking, Connectors envisage that you can currently do these things in Queensland's Outback.

Holiday experiences sought by Connectors often incorporate: escaping the crowds and visiting great natural attractions. They may also incorporate: meeting locals/characters and experiencing culture, heritage and history, discovering nature and exploring the countryside. Connectors already associate these holiday experiences with Queensland's Outback.

Core drivers behind Connectors' ideal holiday include to: explore, have new experiences, escape and leave the cares of the world behind. Typically, Connectors think they would be able to achieve this during a trip to Queensland's Outback.

The Gap between Connectors' holiday needs and wants and what they perceived perceive Queensland's Outback offers

Other activities and attractions preferred by Connectors perceived to be unavailable in Queensland's Outback include: beaches, shopping, rainforests, markets, children's activities, zoos, wildlife parks and festivals.

Other holiday experiences Connectors look for include: a great holiday atmosphere, safety, something for children, easy access, access to water and value for money (it is noteworthy that Connectors often associate value with an ability to exceed their expectations, opposed to just the dollar value). These experiences are not strongly associated with Queensland's Outback at present.

Other core drivers behind Connectors' ideal holiday are to: rest, relax, unwind and de-stress and having fun. These ideals are not currently perceived as attributes strongly linked with Queensland's Outback.

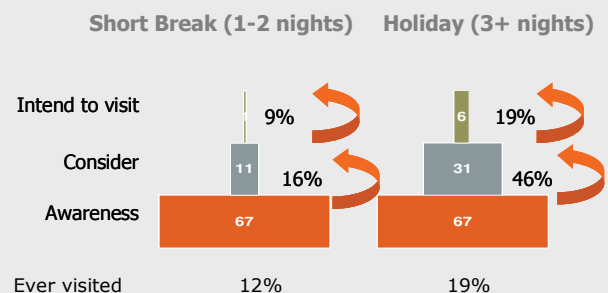
Current synopsis

Seven in ten Connectors are aware of Queensland's Outback as a holiday or short break destination. However, awareness of specific towns and attractions that make up the region is limited. Consideration of the region is higher for holidays (3 nights or more) than for shorter breaks.

This diagram summarises how Connectors' ideal holiday needs and wants overlap with what they perceive Queensland's Outback to offer. Highlighting these attributes may help motivate Connectors to "consider" or "intend" to take a trip to Queensland's Outback .



Conversion of the model below is key to increasing visitation by Connectors to Queensland's Outback . This involves motivating Connectors who are aware of Queensland's Outback to "consider" or "intend" to take a trip there. To assist with this endeavour the research has focussed on how the region fits with Connector's ideal holiday.



Awareness is a foundation measure



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Considerations for the future...

Two thirds of Connectors indicated that they are aware of Queensland's Outback, yet knowledge of specific towns and attractions is low. This includes many with high appeal such as Stockman's Hall of Fame, Qantas Founders Museum, Cosmos Centre and Observatory, Australia's Dinosaur Trail, Lawn Hill Gorge, Big Red and Longreach.

With this in mind when promoting Queensland's Outback, it is important to show (and label) specific destinations so consumers can visualise beyond generic perceptions (e.g. dust, red earth, long straight roads).

Queensland's Outback is associated with longer driving holidays. Leveraging from events held in the region and looking at alternative transport (other than driving) into the region could build the short break market.

Reinforce in communications where Queensland's Outback matches Connector's ideal holiday

Key hurdles include overcoming consumers perceptions of the region as being too rugged (i.e. unsafe or uncomfortable), too hard to get to and too hard to get around. Therefore communications about Queensland's Outback need to:

- Assure Connectors it is easy to plan a trip to Queensland's Outback;
- Reinforce the ease of travelling to and around the region (e.g. the increase in sealed roads, that is only 2 or 4 hours between towns);
- Educate Connectors on activities and attractions (experiences) on-route to "break up" long drives;
- Provide itineraries/preferred routes to help prospective visitors plan their trips – and simultaneously educate them on what's on offer;
- Promote the range of accommodation and dining options to overcome "comfort barriers". While Connectors do not expect luxury they want to know where there is more than camp grounds and caravan parks;
- Highlight events and the diversity of attractions on offer – this should also alleviate the apprehension associated with "isolation"
- Soften the "extreme" aspects of the region to better cater to Connectors expectations.

Connectors perceive that a trip to Queensland's Outback would meet most of their core holiday needs - a new experience, an opportunity to explore, escape and leave the cares of the world behind. However, the aforementioned hurdles contribute to feelings among many Connectors that a trip to Queensland's Outback would not allow for relaxation and a chance to unwind.

Other assets of the region include the regional events and festivals, culture and heritage, locals, chance to explore the country side, chance to escape the crowds and opportunity to bring pets along.

Queensland's Outback offers a clear and unique experience but logistics may need to be enhanced to reassure Connectors they will be comfortable.

