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ECONOMIC STRAINS PERSIST BUT AUSTRALIAN TOURISM BUSINESSES ANTICIPATE INTERNATIONAL BOOST

The September 2024 quarterly business sentiment survey from the Australian Tourism Industry Council details another tough quarter for Australian tourism businesses amid ongoing challenging economic conditions.

The national survey, supported by the state and territory Tourism Industry Councils, found that 69% of businesses were trading as usual however, approximately 41% of businesses saw weaker activity compared to same quarter in 2023, with only 33% of businesses seeing stronger activity.

However, with the average capacity use at 49.8% nationally, businesses are keen and ready to welcome visitors.

The survey identified the main contributing factors to weaker activity were decreased visitors to the area, lack of consumer confidence, weaker economic conditions and rising business costs. On the other hand, businesses seeing stronger demand attributed this to school holidays, growing their digital presence and increasing their investment into advertising and promotion.

Many respondents expecting steady or stronger forward bookings in the next 12 months, compared to the last 12 months, highlighted the return of international visitors as a key factor influencing their outlook for future activity. A Tasmanian respondent said that “international travellers are increasing, and local operators are saying the bookings look good”. This sentiment was echoed by a South Australian respondent who said their “international marketing in the US and UK is really ramping up and delivering sales”.

Businesses remain active in their efforts to attract stronger visitation with 39.5% of respondents planning more investment into their business over the next 12 months compared with their investment over the past year. A New South Wales respondent said that they had new staff, new products and a new business plan to drive out across the next year. A VIC based respondent said that their “digital marketing is working better” and that they were seeing “better profiling and more responses”. The Quality Tourism programs are an ideal way that businesses can continue developing and improving their online presence as well as enhancing their tourism business overall. For more information, [click here](#).

In association with



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Overall, 50% of respondents said they were feeling confident to extremely confident about their business prospects for the next twelve months. With the early influx of improved forward bookings and the gradual return of international travellers, Australian tourism businesses can hopefully look forward to a more active summer holiday period and better business outcomes.

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