

GOLD COAST MARKETING REPORT

AMB209 – Tourism Marketing (Assessment 3)

Dream. Explore. Discover.

A marketing campaign about discovering the best of what the Gold Coast has to offer, off the beaten path. The idea of adventure is pushed through exploring the sea, sand, and mountains.

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1,996 Words

Executive Summary

The *Gold Coast: Dream. Explore. Discover.* campaign targets the Brisbane market for short breaks or day trips to the Gold Coast region. It aims to satisfy 20-39 year olds in the adventure tourism market to make use of the scale of unique attractions and natural resources in the region.

The campaign has three main objectives which aim to improve the perception of the region within the Brisbane market. This is through the *Discover Your Summer* sweepstake promotion to increase awareness of everything the region has to offer as well as driving visitation to more unique attractions.

Hosting key influencers from Brisbane is another key strategy to move away from the unsafe and touristy perception of the Gold Coast region as well as the introduction of a web series to be transparent about the issues.

The ease of access via public transport is also going to be capitalised on through promotions with Translink to increase use while also working in tandem with the council to increase the range of bus services to reach an increased number of hinterland attractions.

Each of the objectives work together to achieve goals of increased visitation, an improved perception of the area, and a more connected region. Whilst appealing to the Brisbane market these tactics can also be adapted to appeal to both interstate and international visitors to the region to ensure its future success.

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1.0 Introduction

Destination Gold Coast is the destination tourism organisation (DMO) for the entire Gold Coast region stretching as far north as Beenleigh and as far south as Coolangatta and the New South Wales border (refer to appendix 1). This region has key areas including Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach, Springbrook and Mount Tamborine. Attractions in the region include major theme parks and water parks, beaches, national parks, animal parks, shopping and whale watching. This report focuses on these aspects of the Gold Coast to produce a new marketing campaign to target short breaks (one to three nights) from the Brisbane market.

2.0 Target Market

In order to take full advantage of the resources found around the Gold Coast, the primary target market for the campaign is adventure tourism. Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors and is evident in today's culture with the increase in various outdoor attractions (Sulaiman & Wilson, 2018). The sector identifies with activities in the areas of physical activity, cultural exchange or activities in nature which exist in all areas of the Gold Coast (Cheng, Edwards, Darcy, & Redfern, 2016).

The target market for this campaign will include anyone in the Brisbane region aged between 20-39 years old as they will be most likely to participate in adventure activities. This equates to 29.5% of the greater Brisbane market with 671,285 people in total (Australian Government, 2017). This age group is also an effective target as they are more likely to have a higher disposable income which is evident by the spike in numbers of travellers (Australian Broadcast Comission, 2017).

Behaviours of the target market include people looking for an active lifestyle and enjoy being outdoors. It also includes people who are looking for thrilling activities such as surfing, rollercoasters or zip lining. This market also engages in compulsive buying which means they make last minute decisions to travel. These behavioural characteristics make up the basic adventure tourist outlined in the World Tourism Organisation's (WTO) Global Report on Adventure Tourism (2014).

3.0 Situation Analysis

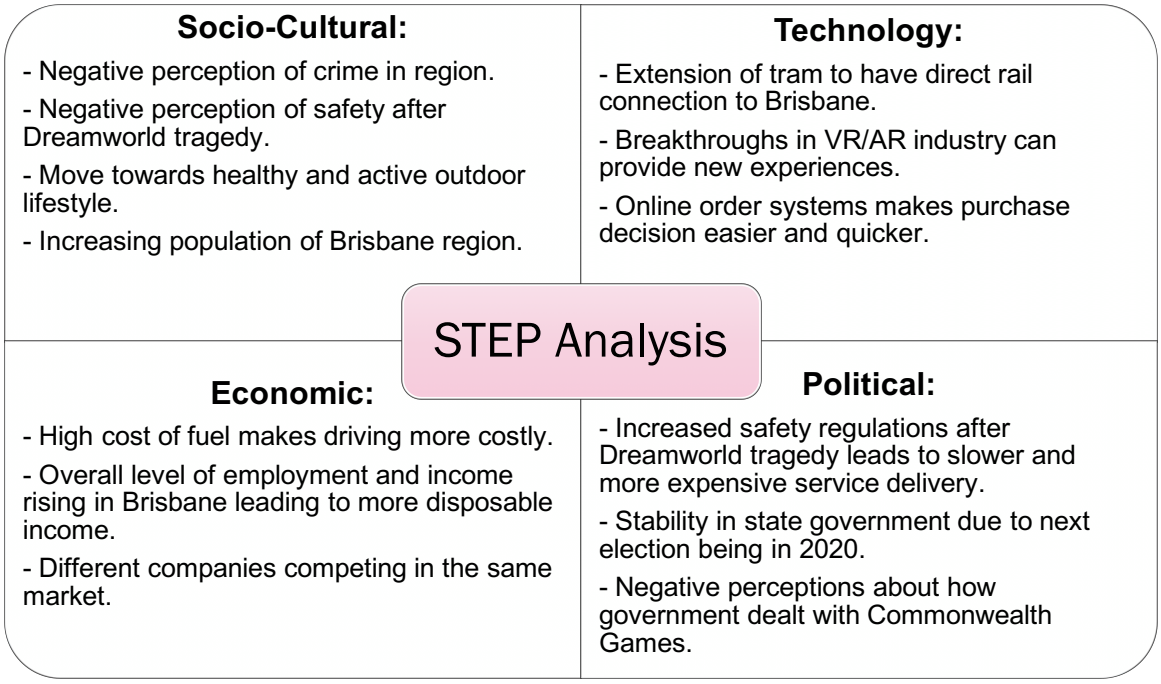
The situation analysis identifies internal and external aspects of the Gold Coast which will impact the marketing campaign. This has been done with a focus on the Gold Coast from the target market's perspective.

3.1 Macro Environment

A STEP Analysis was conducted to evaluate the external environment of the Gold Coast which can be beneficial when creating marketing objectives. Positive impacts from the analysis include the attractiveness of the Brisbane market through population growth and increases in employment and income which lead to a larger target market. Rail links to the region are also a positive making travel easier as well as the amount of local competition (e.g. Ardent Leisure vs. Village Roadshow) driving prices down and improving offerings.

However, negatives from the analysis mainly involve the perceived safety of the region through both attraction accidents and crime due to recent events at Dreamworld and repeated news coverage. This has also led to attractions having to change operations due to new safety standards which can increase prices and decrease supply. Another major negative is the rapid increase of fuel prices which makes driving less appealing from the Brisbane region.

Figure 1: STEP Analysis for the Gold Coast.



3.2 Competition

The Brisbane market has a range of different destinations ideal for a short break holiday. Six destinations are outlined in table 1 with a brief description of what they have to offer compared to the Gold Coast. The table shows that while there is a wide range on offer from competitors, the Gold Coast offers most experiences in the region alone.

Table 1: Table analysing competing short break regions for Brisbane market.

Region	Features
Gold Coast	- Theme parks (Movie World, Dreamworld, Wet 'n' Wild) - Rainforests and waterfalls (hinterland) - Beaches - Zoos/ animal parks (Corrumbin Wildlife Sanctuary) - Whale watching - World Heritage Listed sights
Sunshine Coast	- Beaches - Hinterland (Glasshouse Mountains, rainforests, waterfalls) - Zoos (Australia Zoo) - Farms and Factories (Ginger Factory, Big Pineapple)
Fraser Island	- 4WD holidays - Beaches - Sand Dunes (sandboarding) - Reefs (snorkelling)

Moreton Island	- 4WD holidays - Beaches - Sand Dunes (sand boarding) - Reefs and shipwrecks (snorkelling)
Bunya Mountains	- 'Winter getaway' (colder climate in winter months) - Rainforests and waterfalls - Wineries (South Burnett Wine Trail)
Hervey Bay	- Whale watching - Beaches
Rainbow Beach	- 4WD holidays - Horse riding on the beach - Beach rated one of best in world

3.3 Destination Resources

The Gold Coast's resources have been analysed in the VRIO framework to identify any sources of competitive advantage. Results show that natural resources such as the national parks only produce competitive parity (CP), while the attractions within them (zip lines, treetop walks, etc) are a source of sustainable competitive advantage (SCA). These attractions including theme parks are not easily replicated to the quality and scale in the short term as seen on the Gold Coast. However, other minor attractions such as mini golf and novelty experiences (Ripley's Believe it or Not, Infinity, etc) are a source of competitive advantage (CA) but can easily be replicated.

Table 2: VRIO for Gold Coast region (Brisbane POV).

Resource	Valuable?	Rare?	Imitable?	Organisation?	Competitive Status?
Theme Parks					SCA
Rainforests & Waterfalls					CP
Zoos & Animal Parks					CP
Extreme Activities (zip lines, slingshot, water sports)					SCA
Other attractions (mini golf, walk throughs, museums)					CA
Transport connections					SCA
World class sporting facilities for range of sports events					SCA
Active movie studio					SCA

3.4 SWOT Matrix

A SWOT matrix has been produced by using results from above sections to create a clear focus for strategies. Strengths include the variety of world class attractions in close proximity and the ease of access via public transport from Brisbane. Weaknesses are primarily based around negative perceptions around safety and crime along with the area being overcrowded with international tourists and being 'tacky'.

Opportunities include the growing population in Brisbane which has also led to increased employment and income levels. Further advancements in technology especially around handheld devices in a continuously evolving opportunity also. A major threat for the region is increasing fuel prices as well as crime levels increasing and becoming more evident in local media along with the occurrence and reporting of accidents at attractions. The strategies developed from the SWOT matrix are used to produce the objectives outlined in sections 5 and 6.

Table 3: SWOT Matrix for Gold Coast region

	Strengths - Broad range of attractions and resources in close proximity. - Only major theme parks in Australia. - Direct rail links with Brisbane.	**Weakness** - Negative perceptions of crime in area. - Negative perceptions of safety at attractions. - Negative perceptions about being 'tacky' and 'touristy'.
Opportunities - Growing population in Brisbane. - Increased employment and income levels in Brisbane. - Improvements in handheld technology for information searches and transactions.	**SO Strategy (Searching)** Build compelling and memorable brand around the variety of activities on offer around the region.	**WO Strategy (Taking Advantage)** Push presence on Instagram through direct marketing and influencers showing lesser known attractions away from major tourist areas.
Threats - Increasing costs of fuel. - Biker gangs and other crime being reported in media. - Accidents occurring on attractions. - Extreme or prolonged weather events (drought, cyclone, etc)	**ST Strategy (Avoiding)** Focus on the benefits of public transport and provide promotions to encourage increased travel.	**WT Strategy (Confrontation)** Develop multimedia content on social networks about safety measures on attractions and around streets.

4.0 Positioning Strategy

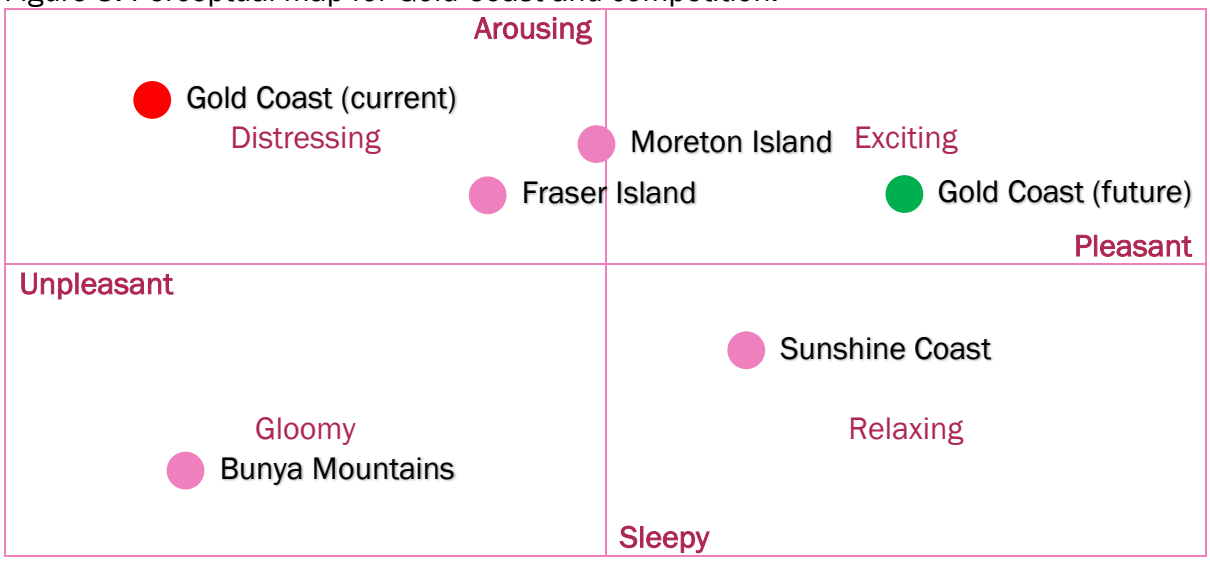
The new tagline for the Gold Coast, *Dream. Explore. Discover.* is an adaption from the Mark Twain quote, "explore, dream, discover," and encapsulates what the new brand will be about. The new logo fits this idea through the basic imagery of the ocean, beach and mountains which are the three aspects of adventure tourism. It also moves away from the modern and expensive feel of the current *We are Destination Gold Coast.* Logo towards a more fun and outgoing design.

Figure 2: Proposed logo and slogan for Gold Coast.



The perceptual map shows the current state of the Gold Coast and its competitors from the Brisbane market. The perceptions outlined in section 3 are a primary reason why the Gold Coast is a distressing place to visit when compared to other destinations like the Sunshine Coast. The new positioning of the Gold Coast will be a push towards a much more pleasant and exciting destination while still having aspects of relaxation through exploring the natural resources on offer.

Figure 3: Perceptual map for Gold Coast and competition.



5.0 Objective & Performance Measure

To align with the strategies outlined in section 3.4, three objectives have been set to push the new brand position for the Gold Coast.

Bolster interest in visiting attractions outside of the Surfers Paradise hub.

- Responds to SO and WO strategies.
- Measured through visitor numbers and number of enquiries at attractions outside of the Surfers Paradise – Broadbeach region.
- Aim to increase average visitation to attractions by 20% and average enquiries by 40% in 2019 calendar year.

Improve Gold Coast's image in Brisbane target market, combat negative stereotypes.

- Responds to WO and WT strategies.
- Measured through consumer perceptions research and media editorial content from Brisbane region.
- Aim to reduce negative media coverage by 25% and increase overall consumer perceptions by 30% by 2020.

Improve public transport connections within areas of the Gold Coast and increase usage of inbound visitors from Brisbane region.

- Responds to ST and WT strategies.
- Measured through overall reach of public transport in hinterland areas and number of Go Card journeys between Brisbane and the Gold Coast.
- Aim to increase Go Card journeys by 20% and increase reach of bus connections to 5 new attractions in hinterland region by 2020.

6.0 Marketing Communication Strategy

6.1 Objective One: Bolster Interest in Visiting Attractions

The first objective is to raise awareness in the Brisbane market of attractions which are largely unknown due to not being in the main tourist hub near the theme parks or Surfers Paradise. Examples of these attractions include:

- Treetop Challenge (high ropes/zipline)
- Adventure Trails (horse riding)
- Sky/Treetop Walk
- Glow Worm Tours

Other attractions include a range of dive sites at reefs, whale watching, wildlife parks, fruit plantations and national parks. These all fit within adventure tourism and appeal to the target market. To satisfy this objective, a sweepstakes promotion will be introduced to the Brisbane region. It will work much like the Monopoly campaign at McDonald's with three ranks of prizes:

- Instant win (unlimited), coupons for free attractions or 2-for-1 offers.
- Intermediate prizes (20), free tickets for attractions.
- Major prize (1), all-inclusive holiday including attraction tickets.

The campaign will have the tagline *Discover Your Summer* and will run from November to February (2018-2019). When launched, stalls will pop up in the Brisbane CBD to attract attention of the target market and raise interest. Scratch cards will also be available on entry at participating attractions around the Gold Coast through the customer's postcode. This means people will be driven to visit attractions to receive scratch cards as it will be the only way to win the major or intermediate prizes. Attractions will also be more willing to participate in the promotion because it will boost their awareness without any advertising expense.

This will also assist in future marketing because winners will be required to redeem the prize in an online portal which involves signing up creating a database for mailing lists and other demographic information (Schiestel, 2017). Short term success will be measured by the number of coupons redeemed at the attractions during the promotion. However, the success of the objective will be measured by an increase in visitors by 20% for the 2019 calendar year and an increase in enquires by 40% during the same period.

6.2 Objective Two: Improve Gold Coast Image

Objective two is much more difficult to quantify however it is critical to make the destination more appealing to the Brisbane market over its competitors. There will be two parts to the strategy for this objective.

The first, is to target key influencers from various backgrounds (news, social media, etc) and inviting them to experience all aspects of the Gold Coast from the attractions to the beach itself. Research shows 92% of people do not trust advertising but they will trust recommendations with 49% of people relying on influencers' opinions (Woods, 2016). This shows the importance of getting influential people to the region and enjoying the attractions on offer as well as the overall atmosphere of the place which also combats negative perceptions around safety and the 'touristy' feel.

The second method is to create an online web series for social media which will visit a range of regions and attractions to showcase experiences and how they work. It will be engaging due to the experiences shown but will aim to be transparent in what happens behind the scenes in terms of safety. This is primarily to combat perceptions around security within the region and safety at attractions.

While it is difficult to measure, consumer surveys will be undertaken to analyse changes in perceptions of the Gold Coast. The aim is to achieve a 30% increase in positive perceptions of safety and security by 2020. Stories about the region in Brisbane media will also be analysed with an aim to have 25% less negative press around safety and security by 2020.

6.3 Objective Three: Improve Usage and Reach of Public Transport

The final objective is to capitalise on ease of access via public transport from Brisbane. Firstly, through working with the council the region aims to connect five more attractions in the hinterland region to main tourist hubs at Surfers Paradise with public transport by 2020. This is the first step to making a trip more appealing without the use of personal transportation.

To coincide with increase public transport reach, various promotions will be made with Translink throughout the year to encourage the use of the trains and light rail over driving. This will not only combat increasing fuel prices, but will also appeal as a green alternative to travel. Promotions will either be discounted tickets on the train from Brisbane City to Surfers Paradise ($5 return) or discounts on accommodation or attractions with a train ticket. This is with the aim of increasing journeys on the G and the Gold Coast line by 20% throughout 2019.

7.0 Budget & Action Plan

The table below is a general guide for spending during the next year. It follows the annual $100,000 budget with assistance from attractions within the region in regard to prizes and hosting influencers.

Table 3: Gold Coast marketing budget.

Activity	Cost
CBD Stall for *Discover Your Summer* promotion:	
- Initial setup cost	$2,500
- Both location (4 days over 1 month... 8m2 booth size)	$28,000
- Major prize cost	$5,000
- Website upkeep	$1,000
Hosting influencers at accommodation and attractions.	
- 15 influencers over year (budget $1,000 per person	$15,000
Online web series:	
- Production team	$5,000
- New hardware for filming	$5,000
Promotions with Translink for increased use of trains (subsidise trips)	$10,000
Advertising:	
- Social media advertisements (sponsored posts, videos)	$10,000
- Billboards	$10,000
Total	**$98,500**

The action plan below is a general guide as to how the campaign will be rolled out. The objectives set are to be met by 2020 so it is a short-term vision which will be expanded in the future.

Figure 4: Gold Coast marketing action plan.

Activity	2018				2019							
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Sweepstakes	■	■	■	■								
Prize redeem period	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
Host Influencers		■	■	■			■	■	■			
Web series					■	■					■	■
Translink promotions		■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■
Social media ads	■	■	■	■			■	■	■			

The campaign will launch with the sweepstakes with the redemption period running till winter. Influencers will have two big pushes to coincide with holiday periods as well as the Translink promotions and social media advertisements. The safety and security web series is planned for the East period when travel is quieter and people are working.

8.0 References

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9.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Map showing boundaries of City of Gold Coast.

