



# NEW RESEARCH CONFIRMS THE POTENTIAL OF VIRTUAL REALITY FOR DESTINATION MARKETING

*Virtual reality (VR) is one of the most exciting innovations in tourism marketing, enabling consumers to live and experience a destination directly from their living rooms. Emerging VR technologies are providing new ways for consumers to engage with destinations, providing a level of immersion and engagement unmatched by other media. VR is potentially a game changer for the travel sector, representing a more compelling and dynamic mode of storytelling. This research provides a better understanding of VR as a digital marketing tool to facilitate an improved user experience.*

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

- > VR brings a destination to life and can make consumers consider travelling to places they otherwise would not have considered.
- > Consumers are most interested in experiencing VR content relating to nature and wildlife and aquatic and coastal offerings.
- > Motivation to travel to the destinations featured in the VR assets was high overall, with strong potential to inspire and motivate likelihood to visit. Ningaloo Reef was the most popular destination 'to visit' with whale sharks resonating particularly well among consumers.
- > Almost one-fifth of consumers have used VR to help select a holiday destination (19% USA, 14% UK, 19% AUS).
- > Approximately 25 per cent of consumers plan to use VR in the future to assist with choosing a holiday destination (22% USA, 25% UK, 30% AUS).
- > Those who have used VR to select a holiday destination highlighted benefits such as the ability to get a feel of the destination and to preview the experiences on offer, assisting with managing expectations.

- > A Nielsen poll conducted among Americans who viewed the broadcast ad on Facebook revealed an uplift in intention to visit, three times higher than the industry average.
- > These metrics are translating into real results with 104 per cent growth in leads to the Australian tourism industry and a record-breaking year for Australian tourism.

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Tourism Australia partnered with TNS and Google Think Board to understand the potential of VR as a marketing and promotional tool for tourism businesses and destination marketing organisations. The research involved a panel of consumers watching a selection of Tourism Australia's VR film clips using a Google Cardboard VR headset, then being asked questions about the experience and content they'd viewed, as well as questions about VR more generally. The study also involved surveying a sample of 500 consumers in each of Australia, the UK and the US to provide a quantitative understanding of the impact of VR in selecting a holiday destination.

For more information, visit [www.australia.com/360](http://www.australia.com/360)

## TOURISM AUSTRALIA'S EXPERIENCE

Tourism Australia developed 18 different VR film sequences in collaboration with Finch, Vrse and Clemenger BBDO, with the aim of bringing Australia's incredible aquatic and coastal offering to life.

- > 14 per cent of US respondents were aware of TA's VR assets, compared with 18 per cent of British consumers, and just under half of Australians.
- > Since the campaign's launch, TA has recorded 10.5 million views of the 360 videos across Facebook, YouTube and Australia.com.
- > The most popular assets feature a strong emphasis on Australia's aquatic and coastal experiences, and specifically offer some level of wildlife 'interaction'. For example, swimming with sea lions in Port Lincoln and snorkelling in the Great Barrier Reef.
- > The campaign helped drive a 9 per cent increase in visitation and 64 per cent rise in engagement on Australia.com, with length on site exceeding eight minutes.



# EXPLORE AUSTRALIA IN 360°

Australia isn't just a place you see, it's a place you feel.



1. BIDDLECOMBE CASCADE, NORTHERN TERRITORY
2. KATHERINE GORGE, NORTHERN TERRITORY  
(GORGE REVEAL, KAYAKERS & ROCK ART)
3. VLASSOFF CAY, GREAT BARRIER REEF, QUEENSLAND
4. WHITEHAVEN BEACH AND HAMILTON ISLAND, QUEENSLAND
5. GOLD COAST, QUEENSLAND (SURFING)
6. GOLD COAST SKYPOINT, QUEENSLAND
7. SYDNEY HARBOUR, NEW SOUTH WALES
8. LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN, AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY,  
(ROWING EXPERIENCE)
9. MURRAY RIVER FISHING, NEW SOUTH WALES AND VICTORIA  
(HORSE RIDING)
10. GREAT OCEAN ROAD, VICTORIA
11. MCLAREN VALE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA  
(4WD SELICKS BEACH & WINERY)
12. KANGAROO ISLAND, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
13. STOKES BAY, KANGAROO ISLAND, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
14. PORT LINCOLN, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
15. THREE CAPES TRACK, TASMANIA
16. FORTESCUE BAY, TASMANIA
17. ROTTNEST ISLAND, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
18. NINGALOO REEF, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SEARCH FOR 'AUSTRALIA IN 360' IN THE APP STORE (IOS 8.0 OR LATER)  
OR GOOGLE PLAY (ANDROID 4.1 AND UP).



[AUSTRALIA.COM/360](http://AUSTRALIA.COM/360)