

Top Ten Tips for Awards Winning Applications

The Tourism Awards recognize excellence and professionalism in our industry. In reviewing your submission, the judges seek clearly documented, relevant answers to each question. However the best entries usually include some additional ingredients including passion, innovation and flair – the 'wow' factor! Ideally, the way in which you present your business should encourage a judge to feel that he/she would love to experience your product.

1. Complete your answer to each question

Each part of each question needs to be dissected to ensure that it has been fully answered. Similarly a question might include three components and marks are easily lost when one or more components are not addressed. Don't forget to read each question very carefully.

2. Clearly indicate your business viability

No matter how impressive the entry might be, a potential winner *must* indicate that the business fundamentals are sound. In some instances there are good reasons for a business not trading profitably during a particular period – eg. property renovations, and while the judges will take that into account, it is still very important to be able to demonstrate longer term viability.

3. State all the key elements of your Business Plan

Goals and strategies should be well defined and your submission should indicate a clear understanding of the difference between these elements. Outcomes should be measured where possible – ie. demonstrate the results achieved. There needs to be a logical and strong link between each element of the Plan.

4. Convey your marketing activities strategically

The marketing section seems to be consistently difficult for many businesses. The question regarding target markets is often not answered clearly. Market segmentation is the key and determines your related activities. Marketing, promotion and advertising are often confused, so it's important to show that you understand the differences between these terms. Consider how your marketing plan integrates with Tourism Tasmania's broader strategies including Tas e-Connect.

5. Ensure that you are entering the category most appropriate to your product/experience

This can seem a little confusing sometimes, but remember you must be able to demonstrate your eligibility for the category you choose to enter, so please give it careful consideration. If in doubt, contact the TICT for advice *before* you commence your submission. Otherwise you run the risk of automatic exclusion from the judging process.

6. Don't be reluctant to mention your competitors

You can really enhance your submission by highlighting your unique selling proposition (USP), but to do so effectively, you must be able to articulate the comparisons between your offerings and those of your competitors. (Keep in mind that this is not about being critical of other businesses, but rather the additional experiences, facilities and value that gives your business the competitive edge.)

7. Think laterally

Make the most of your opportunity to show the judges that you adopt a creative and dynamic approach to your business – that you are thinking beyond 'the basics.'

For example, risk is not just about OH&S issues, but also the need to mitigate against fraud, IT issues, external market factors and the like; innovation is not about replacing furnishings, but being clever and responsive to the market; sustainability might include food miles; special needs will include disability, but what about group rates; contributing to the industry is not just about attending workshops or participating in promotions, but also includes those voluntary tasks that you might undertake to assist the industry in a broader sense.

8. No appendices

Remember that your submission must stand alone as appendices are no longer allowed! This highlights the need to convey all information in a way that is precise and easy for the judges' to read and understand. Graphs and charts are useful and sometimes provide a welcome break from long, continuous sections of text.

9. Consider who prepares your submission

Make sure that whoever prepares your submission really understands your business. If you choose to outsource the task to a consultant for example, ensure that you can provide as much information as possible. Look for someone who has already written a winning entry.

10. Passion

Passion is so important; it's an idea worth repeating! Convey your commitment through your words and your images - these might include owners, staff and customers as well as experiences, facilities etc. The best submissions are not only about a professional-looking document; they are also 'up-beat', capture the judges' attention and provide a great read!