

Business Events CHECKLIST



A quick reference guide for venues and suppliers

ABOUT DESTINATION SYDNEY SURROUNDS SOUTH

[Destination Sydney Surrounds South \(DSSS\)](#) is one of seven Destination Networks formed by the NSW Government to help grow the visitor economy in regional NSW. The DSSS region encompasses the five local government areas of [Kiama](#), [Shellharbour](#), [Shoalhaven](#), [Wingecarribee](#) and [Wollongong](#). DSSS recognise the significant opportunities that business events can bring to our local economies and with a range of established accommodation options, venue facilities and event suppliers, the region is well placed to leverage these opportunities.

The Business Events Checklist has been developed as a helpful resource for DSSS suppliers who are new to the business events industry and are unsure of where to start.

For more information on DSSS and resources available contact info@dnsss.com.au

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DISCLAIMER

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What are Business Events?

The [Business Events Council of Australia \(BECA\)](#) defines a business event as any public or private activity consisting of a minimum of 15 persons with a common interest or vocation.

This need for a business event is driven mainly by the organisation choosing it as a forum to communicate messages, to educate or train, to promote a product, to reward or celebrate, to collaborate on issues and solutions, or to generate resources¹. This can include:

- Conferences
- Conventions
- Congresses
- Seminars
- Symposia
- Forums
- Annual General Meetings
- Workshops
- Exhibitions
- Trade shows
- Satellite meetings
- Field and technical trips
- Board meetings
- Training programs
- Meetings
- Incentive groups (corporate reward programs)
- Corporate retreats
- Awards nights
- Product launches

Australia hosted approximately 484,000 business events in FY19, directly contributing \$35.7 billion to the Australian economy².

1 [Business Events Council of Australia \(BECA\)](#)

2 [Value of Business Events to Australia: FY19 high-level update, EY, March 2020](#)

How do Business Events differ from the leisure market?

Business event clients and delegates have different requirements from those of the leisure tourist. The location selection process and factors influencing this decision also differ. Furthermore, business event delegates spend more than the traditional leisure tourist. On average a conference delegate to regional NSW will spend \$309 per night during their stay³.

The below table provides an overview of the key differences between these markets⁴ and how they also differ to that of the wedding market. Note: there are always anomalies, the details provided are a general rule of thumb.

	LEISURE MARKET	WEDDING MARKET	BUSINESS EVENTS MARKET
Destination decision	Individual	Couple	Host organisation
Purpose	Recreation	Social	Business
Decision factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price • Accessibility • Individual appeal • Corporate social responsibility (CSR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price • Accessibility • Individual appeal • Capacity to accommodate guest list • Aspiration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price • Accessibility • Destination appeal to delegates, sponsors and speakers • Capacity to accommodate size of group and event dates • Event rotation e.g. capital city, regional city, emerging town • Local support and local expertise • Local industries, such as agriculture, manufacturing, STEM • Corporate social responsibility (CSR)
Booking period	Flexible	Flexible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies depending on host organisation sector*. In general: • Association – long lead time 3+ months and can be 12 months or more in advance • Corporate – short lead time usually less than 3 months, longer if larger international delegates • Incentive - varies on country of origin
Booking agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct • Travel agent • Online travel agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct • Wedding planner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting planner / Professional conference organiser (PCO) • Agency - Event manager / Event producer/ PR agency • In-house - Event manager / Executive Assistant / Events team / Local organising committee
Standards	Wide range	Wide range	Higher standards of accommodation

* Note these are traditional booking periods. COVID has impacted some timelines and these longer-term trends are yet to be identified.

3 Based on NVS data for YE September 2019 (pre bushfires and COVID), source: Destination NSW

4 [NSW Regional Conferencing Toolkit, Destination NSW](#)

How do Business Events differ from the leisure market? CONTINUED

	LEISURE MARKET	WEDDING MARKET	BUSINESS EVENTS MARKET
Days of the week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible • Often weekends and school holidays 	Friday - Sunday However due to COVID this has shifted with availability, some weddings are taking place mid-week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday to Friday • Avoiding school holidays
Focus	Leisure activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceremony proximity • Photo locations • Wedding venue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business program with clear objectives • Opportunities to understand business outcomes in the local context, such as educational visits to a solar farm or manufacturing plant
Client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual • Agents • Wholesalers • Online travel agencies 	Couple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host organisation (from corporate, association or government sector) • Event manager / Meeting manager • Professional conference organiser (PCO) • Destination management company (DMC) • Corporate travel management company
Who pays the bill	Leisure visitor	Couple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference /meeting paid by the host • Accommodation –individuals' company (i.e. multiple companies) or the host organisation
Chance of repeat booking	Likely	Unlikely (or via referrals only)	Likely
Spend per person in regional NSW	Overnight visitors spent \$517 per trip \$162 per night (YE Sept 2019) ⁵	Difficult to quantify, average spend per person results vary significantly depending on wedding style and location	Conference visitors spent \$704 per trip and \$309 per night in YE Sept 2019 ⁵ While spend is higher, return on investment is also higher
Suppliers	Tourism suppliers	Wedding suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism suppliers • Business event suppliers
Local events and festivals engagement	Travel for the event and participate as ticket holders	Likely to avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage the event • Often looking for group VIP experiences, for example guided tours and team building activities that are not available to the public • Look for business learnings from the event
Local industries, such as food, agriculture, science, and technology	Limited based on leisure products and availability	Not applicable	Will include educational tours and/or potentially choose the destination based on local industries and/or local suppliers. This also saves on costs.

5 Based on NVS data for YE September 2019 (pre bushfires and COVID), source: Destination NSW

Understanding the different types of Business Events

<p>Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event provides an opportunity to bring their membership base together and provide education • Revenue from event is vital for the association • Budget is driven by registration numbers and sponsorship • Often includes an exhibition / trade show • Delegates pay for own registration and accommodation 	<p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event is business focused • Fixed budget • Minimal extra spend • Follow clear procurement processes
<p>Corporate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To communicate internally or showcase externally • Fixed budget and delegate numbers • May include team building activities and /or an Awards Night 	<p>Incentive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reward and recognise top performing employees • The program includes team activities and unique (money can't buy) experiences • Fixed budget and delegate numbers • May include an Awards Night

Note: The above table outlines general characteristics for each type business event. As always, there are exceptions.

For further information on the business events sector, key market segments and trends refer to the [NSW Regional Conferencing Toolkit](#).



Am I Business Events ready?

Unsure if you are *business events ready*? Take a look at the below checklist for what to consider and some handy tips to help you get started.

CHECKLIST FOR ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS

✓	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	HELPFUL TIPS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Can I allocate a portion of accommodation rooms (a room block) for delegates attending an event? And be willing to contract up to 12 months out?	Provide a number of complimentary upgrades or free-of-charge rooms for VIPs as part of the room block offer. Note: these requirements will vary between corporate and association events.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the room rate attractive for delegates?	Offer a reduced group room rate and even a special rate for those delegates that wish to extend their stay (pre/post the event). Provide a welcome message on the in-room TV recognising the company and/ or conference purpose.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Can my property manage a group check-in? Does my property have a separate check-in area (not always required)?	Including a welcome sign in the area and throughout the hotel with the client or event logo adds a nice touch. Think about ways to streamline the check in process for delegates, such as completing online forms pre-arrival.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is my property easily accessible for delegates attending by private car / bus or public transport?	Offer free parking as a value add if appropriate. Highlight any transport links to airport, train or bus station and proximity to helicopter landing site, if applicable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my property offer venue space that could be used for business events? If so, take a look at the Venue Questions to Consider.	There could be an opportunity to host offsite elements of an event, such as VIP or sponsor meetings and networking events.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do the team members working front of house understand the difference between guests staying at the property for leisure purposes versus business events?	It is important that all team members understand the difference between a leisure and business event guest. Include options for payment at checkout. For example, paid on the host's account or by the individual.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my property have a dedicated point of contact to handle business event related reservations?	Consider having a separate point of contact - not your wedding / social events manager. This can take many shapes such as dedicated email address and shared inbox. The role may also be shared among multiple individuals with appropriate training for all.
<input type="checkbox"/>	How does my property respond to enquiries? Is there a template to use when responding to a Request for Proposal (RFP)?	Destination NSW have a handy RFP Response Template to help get you started. Ensure this is professionally presented. Turnaround time is important, so make sure you respond by the deadline.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my property partner with other local businesses in the area that may also benefit from business events?	Consider how you can showcase your region to delegates staying at your property, for example local products in room, incorporate local produce in food and beverage menus or offer morning yoga sessions for delegates. Remember they are choosing a destination as much as your property. Collaboration with local partners not only makes the client's booking process easier but it will enhance your chance of winning the business.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a representative from the property attended or exhibited at a business events tradeshow (such as Get Global/Get Local, Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME))?	Opportunity to network with potential clients, grow your profile and generate new business.

Am I Business Events ready? CONTINUED

CHECKLIST FOR VENUES

✓	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	HELPFUL TIPS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue have capacity to host groups?	Know what your venue can (and cannot) accommodate. Be clear about your capacity limits (per set up or sqm).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue have floor plans and capacity information readily available?	Ensure this information is easily accessible on your website through downloadable capacity charts and floor plans and /or virtual tours. For example, see Novotel Wollongong Beach's Virtual Walkthrough .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue offer food and beverage packages for business events? If so, can my venue or catering company deliver on these packages?	Offer options, such as full and half day delegate catering packages. Flexibility on food and beverage is critical.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue provide sufficient audio-visual (AV) equipment in-house? Or does this need to be outsourced?	Be clear about what AV equipment is available, what is included with the room hire and what is not. If outsourcing AV include a list of preferred local suppliers that know your venue well.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is my venue easily accessible for delegates attending by private car / bus or public transport?	Offer free parking as a value add if appropriate. Highlight any transport links to train or bus station and proximity to helicopter landing site, if applicable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue have a dedicated point of contact to handle business event enquiries?	Consider having a separate point of contact - not your wedding / social events manager. This can take many shapes such as dedicated email address and shared inbox. The role may also be shared among multiple individuals with appropriate training for all.
<input type="checkbox"/>	How does my venue respond to enquiries? Is there a template to use when responding to a Request for Proposal (RFP)?	Destination NSW have a handy RFP Response Template to help get you started. Ensure this is professionally presented. Turnaround time is important, so make sure you respond by the deadline.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does my venue partner with other local businesses in the area that may also benefit from business events?	Consider how you can showcase your region to delegates attending your venue. For example, include local produce in the catering, work with local event theming, florists and entertainment suppliers. Have a list of local suppliers that you work with – this is a helpful tool for the client.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a representative from the venue attended or exhibited at a business events tradeshow (such as Get Global/Get Local , Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME))?	Opportunity to network with potential clients, grow your profile and generate new business.

Am I Business Events ready? CONTINUED

CHECKLIST FOR SUPPLIERS

✓	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	HELPFUL TIPS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is my product appealing to business event clients and / or delegates?	Be clear about what your product can offer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Can my product be adapted for groups (if it doesn't already do so)?	Know your capacity limits. Think about creating bespoke experiences.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do I have a dedicated point of contact to handle business event enquiries?	Consider having a separate point of contact - not your wedding / social events manager. This can take many shapes such as dedicated email address and shared inbox. The role may also be shared among multiple individuals with appropriate training for all.
<input type="checkbox"/>	How do I respond to enquiries? Is there a template to use when responding to a Request for Proposal (RFP)?	Destination NSW have a handy RFP Response Template to help get you started. Ensure this is professionally presented. Turnaround time is important, so make sure you respond by the deadline. Evidence of insurance such as public liability may be requested.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Can my product partner with other businesses in the area that may also benefit from business events?	Consider how you can showcase your region to delegates and what businesses may complement your product. For example, a local winery offering pre-dinner wine tastings at the hotel or conference dinner venue. Or an early morning historic walking tour or breakfast with local wildlife.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a representative from the business attended or exhibited at a business events tradeshow (such as Get Global/Get Local , Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME))?	Opportunity to network with potential clients, grow your profile and generate new business.



Case studies

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS



WOLLONGONG



Click to view each video. Source: Destination NSW



Key industry organisations and resources

RESOURCES

Business Events Australia

Tourism Australia's specialist unit, Business Events Australia, works closely with the Australian business events industry, delivering research, partnerships and opportunities to meet and do business with international business events planners. For more information visit: businessevents.australia.com/en/resources/information-for-australian-businesses

Destination NSW

Destination NSW is responsible for devising and implementing strategies to grow the State's visitor economy. With a focus on driving tourism and acquiring and developing major sporting and cultural events for Sydney and Regional NSW.

In addition, Destination NSW is the major investor in [Business Events Sydney](#) with the aim of securing more international conventions, incentive travel reward programs, corporate events and exhibitions for Sydney and Regional NSW.

Destination NSW's Regional Conferencing Unit promotes business events in Regional NSW and provides a range of resources for operators new or keen to grow existing business in this sector. DSSS operators can also register for a free website listing on [Meet in Regional NSW](#).

For more information visit: meetinnsw.com.au/business-events-tools

INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS

Business Events Council of Australia

The Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) is the peak industry body for the business events sector. BECA develops industry positions on issues of common interest and communicates those views to government and relevant agencies. BECA also provides a forum for business event industry associations to exchange information and cooperate on appropriate matters, with a view to strengthening and growing the business events sector in Australia. For more information, [visit their website](#).

Exhibition & Event Association of Australasia

The Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) is the peak industry association for those in the business of trade and consumer expos and events. EEAA work to ensure industry growth by encouraging high industry standards, promoting the professionalism of its members and highlighting the unique business opportunities that exist through exhibitions and their associated events. Suppliers can become members. For more information, [visit their website](#).

Meetings & Events Australia

Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) represents the events industry in Australia. MEA offers professional development and educational programs and accreditation. It provides a forum for members to discuss current issues and exchange ideas to improve the delivery of events. Suppliers can become members. For more information, [visit their website](#).

Professional Conference Organisers Association

The Professional Conference Organisers Association is the leading body representing the interests of professional conference organisers and event managers in Australia and New Zealand. The Association's objectives are to increase the standard of professionalism of its members and promote a better understanding of the roles, functions and contributions of professional conference organisers and event managers and other practitioners in the conference and event sector. Suppliers can become members or business partners. For more information, [visit their website](#).

Business Events Checklist

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