



## Customer Service – For VIC Volunteers

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## Customer Service Training

Volunteer staffing is an integral part of any Visitor Information Centre (VIC) business mix in today's times of limited resources. Many new VIC volunteers come to us with a wide range of life and work experience. Some of this experience is relevant and some not so relevant. However, they all have one thing in common – a huge amount of enthusiasm. This enthusiasm is well intentioned. However, you may find that this enthusiasm also requires some guidance. This is usually in areas of customer service and areas specific to your business and tourism needs.

This workshop focuses on teaching volunteers about balancing their work and life experience with the needs of your business as a busy VIC. We focus on areas unique to tourism and draw on relevant experience in the room – it is important that volunteers feel appreciated, but they need to also understand their impact on tourism in your area and the customers in which they deal with. Many of the issues we face with front line staff is their own understanding of their influence on travellers and ultimately customer satisfaction. In most customer service satisfaction situations, the interaction with staff is the number one driver of happy customers.

This workshop takes a more practical approach. The focus will be on integrating important information about customers and your business. We will work with various case studies, role play and have lots of fun.

### Topics covered

- Your VIC operations and business
- A little basic marketing – there are different types of customers with different needs.
- How to get to know your customer and interacting with customers
- Giving the right information to the right customer
- The Customer and customer satisfaction
- The importance of knowing your product and continuous learning
- Influential customer touch points – phone, email, personal
- Working with paid staff members
- If you don't know something, its OK to ask
- Sourcing information
- Complaint handling – the 360 degree turnaround
- Today's dynamic markets and a world of constant changes

## **Outcomes**

- This workshop will give participants a basic but practical introduction to the principles of customer service and product knowledge.
- Participants will realise the importance of their interactions with customers
- They will take away a practical knowledge of how to integrate learning within your VIC business

## **Speaker notes**

- Speaker notes will be supplied for participants
- I also make myself available on an ongoing basis for questions that you may have after the workshop.

## **Note**

Please be advised that this workshop can be adapted to suit your individual business needs and objectives.

## About Bronwyn White

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Bronwyn White has extensive hands on knowledge in many aspects of the travel and tourism industry. This experience has been gained over the past 18 years through varied roles with Qantas, Tourism New South Wales and consulting to the industry. Her knowledge and appreciation of the travel industry is extremely well rounded, built around a foundation of practical experience and ongoing study in tourism and international business disciplines.

Regional tourism has been an area that Bronwyn has specialised in over the past 4 years. Regional tourism can at times be a very complex and challenging industry. It has been highlighted through experience, that careful and insightful management of stakeholders and relationships is a key to successful outcomes.

Bronwyn has gained experience from exposure to the retail, wholesale, corporate and leisure travel, group and incentive travel and regional travel from both international and domestic perspectives. She has also spent many years in various sales and marketing capacities within these areas. Most recently Bronwyn has been working in the areas of destination representation, market research, strategic marketing and tactical planning for the travel industry through her own company.

In her role as Regional Marketing Manager for Tourism New South Wales, she was involved in the implementation of various integrated marketing campaigns promoting destinations within regional New South Wales. The role was largely an educational one, where in many instances the merits of a consumer driven marketing strategy had not historically been a primary focus within the regions. It was quite a challenge and a rewarding one at that to involve an industry who traditionally would have relied on old-fashioned advertising techniques. Bronwyn was able to introduce elements such as market research, direct marketing and integrated targeted marketing to a stakeholder group who are quite resistant to change.

Bronwyn feels extremely privileged to have had an 11 year career at Qantas Airways. This tenure provided her with a solid platform where she was able to gain valuable knowledge and insight into many aspects of the travel industry. Bronwyn held 6 positions in total, starting at an entry level position at Qantas Holidays and ending in the position of Market Research Communications Manager working on marketing strategy and change management. During her time at Qantas, Bronwyn was steadily promoted to more senior positions across many areas of the business.

Her most recent experience at Qantas was within the Marketing Research Department as the Market Research Communications Manager. As a major part of this role, Bronwyn was heavily involved in analysing aspects of the marketing strategy which influenced the strategic direction of the organisation such as customer satisfaction, brand health, new product development, advertising and communications.

The key focus of this role was the analysis, interpretation and communication of market research. Bronwyn also gained extensive experience in managing ad-hoc market research projects from questionnaire design through to presentation of the data in the form of key insights and recommendations to stakeholders. Bronwyn has an insightful knowledge of advertising having been involved in the research of campaigns including the 'I still call Australia Home' campaign and **oneworld**. Advertising tracking of both Qantas and its main competitors were also included this role.

Roles previous to the Marketing Strategy and Development department were focused around industry and consumer sales, customer service and relationship management. She has experience in the area of Group Sales which involved managing various accounts from travel agents, professional conference organisers (PCO), corporate entities and sporting groups. This included inbound and outbound sales. She also actively sought and won business across these groups seeking lucrative contracts and encouraging tripartite agreements across businesses. For example, between The Event Centre (PCO), Intel (organisation) and Qantas (carrier). Bronwyn believes that this sort of experience in negotiation skills and relationship management is mandatory in enhancing productive relationships, no matter what level of tourism one is operating in. Prior to this Bronwyn worked in international export sales negotiating similar types of contracts with exporters and freight forwarders alike.

Her practical experience also encompasses the more traditionally known areas of retail travel, corporate travel and wholesale travel. Bronwyn has worked as a travel agent for the Qantas Travel Centres, Qantas Corporate Travel and Qantas Holidays.

Bronwyn has committed to undertake further study focusing on the travel and tourism industry and marketing management. She has been able to combine her two areas of passion: marketing and tourism, to study for several qualifications including one degree and two diplomas.

Bronwyn believes that all of this experience combines to provide her with exceptionally well rounded knowledge and understanding of what is at times a complex, volatile but exciting industry.