



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 21 February, 2013

Digital Innovation Set to Drive NSW Tourism

Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, today announced the launch of an Australian tourism first – a digital innovation which showcases Sydney and the Hunter Valley wine region through unique aerial tours which users can control and navigate their way around with a 360 degree view.

“Innovation in the digital space was a key recommendation of the Visitor Economy Taskforce report and this is now being delivered by the NSW Government,” Mr Souris said.

In announcing the launch of a new digital marketing tool - Sydney 360° - developed by Destination NSW, Mr Sours said: “This is designed to motivate potential visitors to experience breathtaking scenery and major attractions and plan and book their visit.

“Sydney is the first area to be showcased, with the Hunter Valley Wine Region the first NSW Regional destination to be shown in a 360° view.

“As well as the high definition interactive aerial tours, first person experiences have also been created, enabling people to put ‘their face in the picture’ and get a first-hand feel for what it’s like to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge, interact with animals at Taronga Zoo, surf at Bondi Beach, cycle at Manly and kayak on Sydney Harbour. These videos can then be shared through Facebook.

“We expect four million people in Australia and around the world to view the range of 360° videos that will promote awareness of and drive interest in Sydney and Regional NSW as attractive tourist destinations,” the Mr Souris said.

Mr Souris also announced that NSW tourism websites have experienced record visits, leading to increased opportunities for NSW tourism operators.

Last month, both the sydney.com and visitnsw.com websites reached recorded highs for the number of visitors to the sites with a month-on-month increase of 87 per cent from a year ago and sales leads to the industry up 170 per cent.

Achievements include:

- Listing of Destination NSW’s websites in the Top 10 Travel and Accommodation websites in Australia.
- A 70 per cent increase in visitors to the sites.
- A 130 per cent growth in requests for NSW event information through the sites.
- A 100 per cent increase in traffic to the sites through links and referrals from other sites.
- The introduction of mobile websites designed specifically for smartphones and tablets, to give potential visitors a superior ‘on the go’ experience of the sites.
- An increase of engagement with Sydney and NSW social media channels; 54.7 per cent increase on Facebook and 265 per cent increase on Google.

“With tourism expenditure by overnight visitors in NSW worth more than \$20.3 billion and the tourism industry supporting more than 159,000 jobs, it is vital that we leverage every available opportunity to encourage more visitors to our state”.

Sydney 360° is available to view at www.sydney.com/sydney360