

Topic | E-marketing

Tutorial 31A

Optimising your ATDW Listing

Learn how a well-crafted ATDW listing can attract more customers.

Reading time: 40 minutes

Prerequisite: Australian Tourism Data Warehouse



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Tourism Education
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Queensland Tourism Award Winner
Tourism Education and Training
2011, 2012, 2013



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Introduction

This tutorial will show you how a well-crafted ATDW listing can attract more customers. In this tutorial we will explain:

1. What ATDW is
2. Benefits of an ATDW listing
3. Your first step in getting an ATDW listing
4. How to write an effective ATDW listing description
5. How to make your listing stand out with photos
6. How good video imagery can say more than words and a photo
7. The highly beneficial relationship between your listing, Tourism Australia, your local State or Territory Tourism Organisation (STO) and their marketing campaigns.

We salute your expertise. We admire your interest in improving your online marketing. Nobody knows your business better than you. Nobody else has your passion. These are your strengths, so with that in mind, let's get started.

1. What is ATDW?

The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) is a database of Australian tourism information that caters specifically for Accommodation, Attraction, Events, Tour, Transport, Hire operators and Restaurant categories.

Eligible information is collected and curated by Australia's State and Territory Tourism Organisations. This means it meets a set of national standards. This in turn means that the tourism information in this database has the potential to be the most current, credible and informative and highly sought after data for your customers.

ATDW stores and then publishes your tourism information to State, Territory and Regional Tourism Websites and other travel related websites and smartphone apps.



2. Benefits of an ATDW listing

An ATDW listing has many benefits for tourism operators. These include:

- the ease of a one-off listing that will appear on multiple websites
- the significant amount of exposure your listing will gain from appearing on a highly reputable State or Territory Tourism Organisation website that attracts well over a million visitors each year
- the opportunity for most database categories to also appear on Tourism Australia's website www.australia.com
- the savings you'll make and can therefore use in other areas of your business because ATDW listings are either free or only charge a very small annual fee
- a system that will prompt you to answer the necessary questions and provide your potential new customers with the information they want to see
- the ability to have your information updated quickly and without additional cost
- quality control by your State or Territory Tourism Organisation so you know your listing is at a national standard.

3. Your first step towards an ATDW listing

The first thing you'll need to do is to find out whether or not your business is already listed on the ATDW. It's possible that either your State or Territory Tourism Organisation or someone else in your business may have previously registered and entered a listing. It's good to check that you're not duplicating their effort. You can look up ATDW products at <http://atdw.com.au/products/>

If you can't find a listing for your business or event, check your eligibility and register with your State or Territory Tourism Organisation. You will find their contact details on this page <http://atdw.com.au/howtolistorupdate/>. More information on the ATDW and benefits of listing on the ATDW can be found here <http://atdw.com.au/tourismoperators/>.

We recommend that before you start, you carefully consider this:

A professional, well written description, great photos and video are the most important components of your ATDW listing. Even if these are the only areas that you focus on, success can still be yours!

Tip - Create an ATDW listing folder - it can be a manila folder or a folder on your computer. Add the notes you just created about finding your listing.

4. How to write an effective ATDW description that may help in attracting more customers

Your description should engage the consumer, captivate them and make them want to book!

FEATURE

FACT

VS

BENEFIT

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME

In this section we will look at:

- how to differentiate between features and benefits
- the importance of including benefits in your listing
- including your unique selling proposition in your description
- why you should have your most important information in the first one or two sentences of your listing
- why short sentences are better for online promotion
- how to write within the maximum word limit
- information not to include in your description
- how to show your potential customers that you're offering an authentic experience
- the importance of accuracy and currency.

Let's begin:

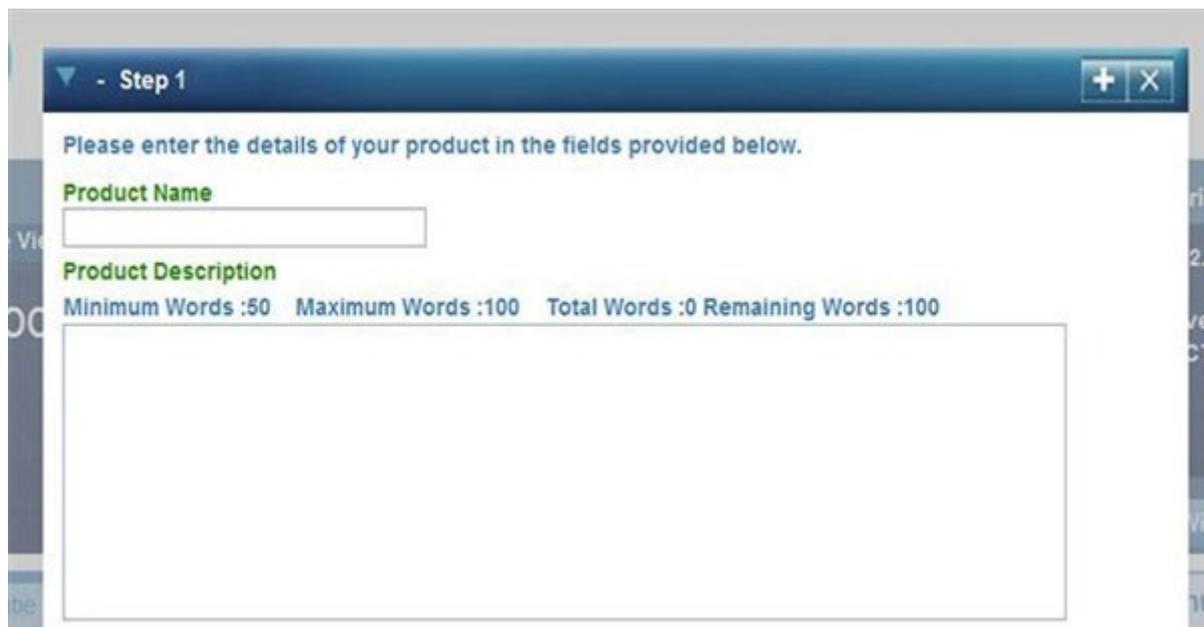
- If customers are looking through a list of tourism operators, you need to give them a reason to stop their search at you. Writing up a list of the features or facilities that you offer won't do it. The key is to focus on the benefits you can offer your customers. Not sure what the difference is? Take a look at the following table:

FEATURE	BENEFIT
floor to ceiling windows	you can enjoy the incredible views of the landscape (or waterfront or city)
tour with commentary	you can hear all about the area from a local who's lived there all their life
free high speed wifi	you can access your social media, emails, internet search or loved ones easily at no extra charge, which then means you have more money to spend on other things while you're away
close to main attractions	you won't need spend your day fighting traffic
cot available	you can travel lighter
award winning building	you can also access great architecture while you're here
interpretive signs	you can learn at your own pace without needing a guide

- Effective promotional messages all contain the following elements; Where, What, Who, How and Why. The listing description is your chance to tell your customers a little of the WHAT and a lot of the WHY. The WHY are your benefits; the 'what's in it for me' factor. If you haven't done it already, write up your benefits. Knowing and promoting your benefits will help you attract more customers.
- Once you've identified your benefits, ask yourself which ones are unique to your business. That special difference is your Unique Selling Proposition (USP). It's important to include your USP towards the beginning of your listing so potential customers can immediately differentiate you from your competitors.
- If you're still not sure about your USP, get some inspiration by asking a contented guest or looking at your positive reviews on Tripadvisor (www.tripadvisor.com.au). Go and experience what your competition offers. At the very least, check out their website or their Trip Advisor review and look for what you offer that others don't. Some examples might be; home-made biscuits and fresh flowers, commentaries in multiple languages or specialist guides.
- For more information on Unique Selling Propositions, check out www.business.qld.gov.au/business/running/marketing/advertising/create-selling-proposition

TIP: add your USP information to your ATDW listing folder and save it for later.

- In today's busy world people want access to the most important information 'now'. Your first sentence should mention your business or event name to help with search engine optimisation. It also needs to include your unique selling proposition. Include your other benefits at the very top of your listing so they don't get missed by someone too busy to read to the bottom.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Step 1" with a close button. The instructions read: "Please enter the details of your product in the fields provided below." There are two main sections: "Product Name" with a single-line text input field, and "Product Description" with a larger multi-line text area. Below the description field, there is a word count indicator: "Minimum Words :50 Maximum Words :100 Total Words :0 Remaining Words :100".

An example of an ATDW listing screen featuring product name and description

- Short sentences are the easiest and quickest to read online. It's that simple. Make sure you only include one key message/benefit per sentence. Limit your sentences to 10 words or less. You'll improve your online promotion by giving your customers quick access to your best points.
- The description section you'll use for your ATDW listing has a maximum word limit. Whatever the limit, the formula is simple. If your limit is 100 words, then you have 10 sentences of 10 words; 150 words means 15 sentences etc.
- If you still have word count left after promoting your own benefits, mentioning great food and wine experiences or tourism businesses nearby adds another benefit. This information can also improve your customers' experience in the area.
- Do not include the Where, How or Who to contact in your listing description. The database has other places for that information.
- NOTE: If you put times, dates, costs, contact details, or hypertext (including URLs) into your description, it will be rejected during Quality Assurance. You'll need to rewrite it.
- Don't use acronyms or abbreviations in your listing. Most people won't know what you mean.
- Avoid italics, bolds, ampersands (&) and special characters whenever possible. They can detrimentally affect the way your listing appears on some websites.
- Write as you talk. Use your personal voice and try to express your personality: "Are you interested in relaxing and unwinding? These beds are so comfortable you'll want to sleep in. Try their great food and enjoy not having to cook." Your personal voice adds authenticity to your business and to your listing. Just remember that your ATDW listing is appearing on someone else's website. Instead of saying 'our' or 'my' or using phrases like 'we will' as you might on your own website, you'll need to write 'their' or simply 'the'. For example "Swim away any tension in their/the sparkling pool".
- The need for authenticity was supported by the introduction of the Google Hummingbird algorithm in late 2013. An algorithm is a 'recipe' to rank websites based on different factors. Hummingbird uses semantics (the analysis of the relationship between words) to rank results and prioritise pages. Semantics focuses on crafting content to answer the specific questions your target market may have. Listing your benefits will help answer these questions up front.

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- Keep your ATDW listing up to date. Nothing annoys a customer more than discovering outdated information. Remember, your one update goes to all the websites where your listing appears.
- Enter events as early as possible so customers can plan ahead and include you in their visit.
- Write your description in a word document before you copy and paste it into ATDW. This will help pick up any accidental spelling and grammar mistakes, which means that your listing is likely to be approved faster.

Here's an example of a great description of one of ATDW's restaurant listings, Steakhouse 66.

Restaurant Description

Steakhouse 66 is all about fresh flavours and sensational views.

The modern Australian menu features a fantastic range of a la carte dishes. Setting off the casual atmosphere, the Steakhouse 66 dips and flat bread are an ideal way to kick off an evening with friends.

As the name suggests, steaks are a highlight of their grills menu. From rib eye fillet to porterhouse, Australian Angus tenderloin to Wagyu rump, you will be spoilt for choice. Steakhouse 66 also has plenty of seafood and vegetarian meals for those who prefer.

Floor to ceiling windows show off the waterfront location so every table has a view of Melbourne's unique waterways.

Tip - Get a friend (or someone outside the business) to look over the description. Sometimes you can be too close to the project to view it objectively.

Now that we've discussed the words, let's look at the pictures.

5. How to make your listing stand out with photos

A picture says a thousand words. Photos are an effective way to add more detail to your listing. In this section we'll look at:

- Why photos are so important in generating interest
- Steps to taking and choosing good quality photos for your listing
- The purpose of Alt Text and why it's important

Why photos are so important in generating interest online

Human beings are visual creatures. Photos enable us to dream. We imagine ourselves in the photo or video; seeing ourselves taking that break or having that experience. Photos should ideally include people so your audience can relate. They don't need to be staged, it's more important that they're authentic.

Let's look at how to get some great shots that will add meaning to your listing.

Steps for taking and choosing good quality photos for your listing

Step 1. Get a good camera



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These days, digital cameras are inexpensive and they often do all the work for you. You can take heaps of shots and experiment without wasting film and developing costs. This YouTube video offers advice on how to select a good digital camera:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LuPAy09ocU>

If you don't want to buy a new camera, the latest smart phones can also take photos and videos with remarkable quality. Just make sure your phone camera settings are correct for the highest possible resolution.

Step 2. Decide which shots will mean the most to potential customers

While you can take hundreds of photos to experiment with your digital camera, for this exercise you'll save time if you decide on the types of photos you want to take first.

Try taking yourself on a "photographic holiday". Find a business or event like yours. Look online or in magazines for photos that inspire you and put them into a folder. Write down why those photos inspired you. What kind of story do those photos evoke?

Now think of photos that will inspire people in the same way about your business or event. Think about the shots like someone who doesn't know what you're offering.

When you take photos, make sure they're ones that will add extra meaning to your listing. You want your photos to highlight your unique selling proposition and show something you didn't have enough words to describe.



Source: Aquaduck, Gold Coast

The photos above are excellent examples of the ability of a photo to explain the experience of going from land to water - they also show the experience is suitable for children and looks fun.

Step 3. How to show your location at its best

Your photos must accurately reflect your business. Honesty will result in better reviews, which will result in more customers. A location shot should engage, inspire, motivate, invite and show off your strong points without giving false impressions. Think about using different camera angles.

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Take a selection of photos at the most appealing time of day (e.g. sunrise); just keep in mind that if your business isn't open at night, a twilight shot may not be appropriate.

Think about views, but make sure you're captioning views appropriately e.g. 'view from the top of the nearby hill', or 'Dining room view from units 1-4'.



Views from the air during the Canberra Balloon Spectacular - Source: Dawn Drifters, ACT



Climbing Sydney Harbour Bridge - Source: BridgeClimb Sydney, NSW



Enjoy wide open spaces at The Buckland - Studio Retreat near Bright

Source: The Buckland Luxury Retreat, Victoria

Step 4. Show a variety of photos

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Consider showing photos:

- with people (remember your target markets)
- without people
- that are close ups
- with wide angle panoramas
- of different room types (for accommodation)
- of different meals (for restaurants)
- of inside shots
- of outside shots
- with different vehicles or destinations (for hire and tours)

Other points to note:

- the ATDW has a limit on the number of photos so choose 4 - 6 that best reflect your business.
- your tourism organisation might have restrictions on size and orientation so check their requirements before you start
- photos must be in jpeg format

Tip: The Wix blog has a great post “7 Photography Tips for Shooting Interiors Like a Pro”.
<http://www.wix.com/blog/2013/11/interior-photography-tips/> See the example shot below.



Source: Anchorage, Port Stephens, NSW

Digital Camera World has “10 quick action photography tips” for shooting action shots :
www.digitalcameraworld.com/2010/10/20/10-quick-action-photography-tips

Step 5. Include experiential and emotional photos for greater appeal

It's great to have shots of people experiencing your business or event. Some customers will see themselves in those photos. Other times they'll want to picture themselves in a people-free space.

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Traditionally, eastern markets like Asia tend to respond more to shots with people, whereas Western audiences prefer big open spaces.

Step 6. Keeping your photos current and real



Source: Mr Spokes Bike Hire, Canberra, ACT

Staged, over produced shots look unreal and don't appeal. Consider using or taking shots like the one above, with real people.

Keep in mind that changing fashions and hairstyles can date a photo.

Changing technology can also date a photo. When did you last have analogue TVs in your rooms? Update your photos when you update your facilities.

Turn off the date stamp on your camera before you start. If you need to remember when photos were taken, then create a folder for that year or season and store them accordingly.

IMPORTANT: If you're using any people in your promotional photos (even in the background) you'll need those people to **sign a release form**. The release form should be designed to permit you to use the person in your photos which will be used for commercial purposes. See tutorial 48 Flickr and Photo Hosting Sites for a sample release form - [/ekittutorials/socialmedia/flickrandphotohostingsites](http://ekittutorials/socialmedia/flickrandphotohostingsites)

Step 7. The importance of high resolution photos

Many people will see your listing on a tablet, smartphone or iPad. It will look much better on these devices if you've used high resolution photos. Your photos will often appear next to those of your competitors. Ensure they're high resolution and promoting you in the best way possible. Today the

ATDW automatically adjusts your photos to ensure they load quickly as part of your ATDW listing, regardless of size.

The ATDW accepts four images per product although different STOs may allow more images. Each image that you load through the MyATDW interface is automatically resized and saved into the various varieties that other distributors and the ATDW require.

Tip: The ATDW ekit tutorial 'Images 101' offers more information about using photos for your own website. See </ekittutorials/website/images101>

The purpose of Alt text and why it's important

Alt text or Alternate text is there for visually impaired people. Screen reading technology will read out the alt text you enter. Alt text should give a brief but accurate description of the photo for people who have low or no vision.

6. Why video is important in your listing

Now that you've created a compelling description and photos, you're already in a position to attract more customers. The third step to success is a video.

Video is a triple treat: people can hear what's going on, see body language and view experiences all at the same time.

Video is one of the most popular content items on the web. You don't need lots of resources to create an authentic video that will provide your customers with more information and add value to your listing.

Even if you don't have a video on your own website yet, it's easy to get one onto your ATDW listing.

A current smartphone makes it easy to shoot video. You can upload a video from your phone to a YouTube channel. Once your video is on your YouTube channel, you can add the link to your ATDW listing. You can also embed the video into your own website.

If you're not confident about creating a short video, professional video producers can do it for you for around \$500 (as at April 2014).

In this section we'll look at:

- what an authentic video includes
- what you should record
- tips for success
- where to find more information

An authentic video will make your business appeal to more customers and should:

- tell your story truthfully



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- be an enjoyable and positive experience

You could record any or all of the following:

- guests enjoying your experience
- local scenery or views from your property
- the ambience of the restaurant
- the highlight of the tour or a testimonial from a happy guest

Tips for great video production

- keep video length to 120 seconds, otherwise people will lose interest
- aim to focus one third of the video on your offering and two thirds on the other reasons to visit your region, including food - people want good food when they're away from home!
- check the YouTube help pages to find out information relating to file length etc. before you commence creating your video
- ensure that the background environment is free from background noise
- have camera or phone close the participant to ensure good sound quality
- feature people using your product in the video
- keep the product as large as possible on the screen
- don't rush panning shots
- get an objective view of your video before you put it on YouTube - if your video is too long or not great quality, we'd recommend you use a video professional to help with editing
- don't add captions or subtitles as these may not be allowed by all video hosts

See the Video for your website e kit tutorial (Number 16A) for more details - [/ekittutorials/website/videoformyourwebsite](http://ekittutorials/website/videoformyourwebsite)

7. The relationship between your listing, Tourism Australia, your State or Territory Tourism Organisation and their campaigns.

Tourism Australia and your State Tourism Organisation regularly run major campaigns to attract more visitors. For updates on how to get involved, you're encouraged to subscribe to Tourism Australia's weekly Essentials e-newsletter <http://www.tourism.australia.com/subscribe> .

Have you heard about Tourism Australia's 'Restaurant Australia' campaign?

" In response to the growing demand globally for food and wine as part of the travel experience, Tourism Australia will be evolving its 'There's nothing like Australia' global consumer marketing campaign to put the spotlight on Australia's finest array of produce served in the most stunning locations in the world ." - Tourism Australia

This is a multi-million dollar campaign designed to highlight the amazing food and wine offerings Australia has. See the Restaurant Australia website for more information - <http://restaurant.australia.com/>

Even though your business or event may not be featured, the campaign will bring visitors to the region and they may visit you. If your listing promotes regional food and wine, you're offering visitors another reason to come to you and supporting the international message.

As Tourism Australia develops each phase of the 'There's nothing like Australia' campaign, it will keep industry updated on opportunities to share in the spotlight on to Australia's food and wine experiences.

8. Summary

In summary, here are the steps to achieve an effective ATDW listing that showcases your business and can maximise your opportunities:

1. Check that you're listed on the ATDW database by visiting your State or Territory Tourism Organisation's consumer website or searching ATDW's database here - <http://atdw.com.au/products/>
2. Contact your State or Territory Tourism Organisation if you can't find a listing. See here for details <http://atdw.com.au/howtolistorupdate/>
3. Write an engaging business description that highlights the benefits and can be quickly read because it uses short sentences
4. Collect compelling photos and video footage for your listing
5. Set a review period to regularly review your description and photos, and schedule these reviews in your diary
6. If something changes in your business, change your listing
7. Remember to "cross promote" other businesses in your region and/or major campaigns in your copy
8. STOs reserve the right to reject changes that you have made in your MyATDW. Ask for an explanation and advice on how to improve your listing

And our final tip ... **keep everything related to your ATDW listing in one place and** and note down your username and password.

Good luck! Remember, your State or Territory Tourism Organisation is there to help!

Related Material

- Images 101
- Video for your website
- Australian Tourism Data Warehouse
- Tourism Exchange Australia
- YouTube and video hosting sites
- Flickr and photo hosting sites