

SELL

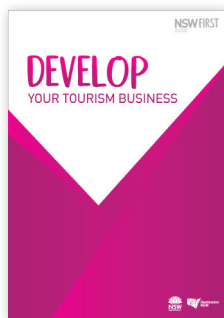
YOUR BOOKABLE PRODUCTS ONLINE

NSW FIRST PROGRAM

The NSW First program is a Destination NSW initiative that assists NSW tourism businesses to develop, promote and sell their tourism products. It includes a range of workshops and webcasts, resources and guides for the NSW tourism industry.

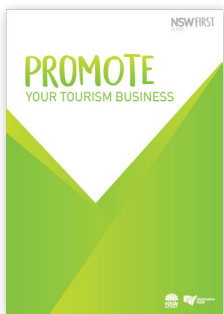
Register to receive NSW First updates and view the NSW First event calendar online at destinationnsw.com.au/nswfirst.

NSW FIRST GUIDES



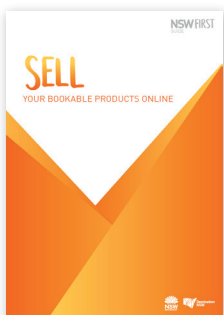
DEVELOP YOUR TOURISM BUSINESS

Develop great tourism experiences — whether you are just starting out or taking the next steps in your business. Gain a better understanding of the tourism industry, and get practical tips and insights for your developing business, creating market-matched products and standing out from the crowd.



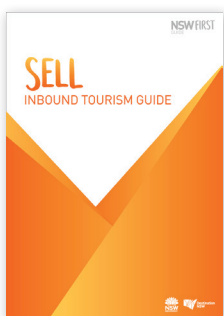
PROMOTE YOUR TOURISM BUSINESS

Promote your tourism experience through a range of channels, including digital marketing, media and via local networks, using well-planned marketing tools. Find out how to get involved in Destination NSW opportunities to extend your marketing reach.



SELL YOUR BOOKABLE PRODUCTS ONLINE

Find out how to sell your bookable tourism products directly to customers on your website and work with third party distributors like online travel agents to make your products widely available online.



SELL INBOUND TOURISM GUIDE

Sell your tourism product to international visitors by partnering with the inbound travel trade. Find out how to become export ready, tailor your product for international visitors and prepare your business to connect with the distribution partners in the travel trade.

SELL

YOUR BOOKABLE PRODUCTS ONLINE

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Disclaimer

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SELL YOUR BOOKABLE PRODUCTS ONLINE

INTRODUCTION

Consumers today expect an easy and seamless booking process, so there is no better time to consider selling your tourism experience online. Whether you are a small or large tourism business, providing customers with the ability to book your products online is helpful to both them and you.

Does your tourism business have a 'book now' button on your website?

Do you distribute your products via other online marketplaces?



What is a bookable tourism product?

A bookable product is a tourism experience that has a set price and can be booked and paid for in advance of the customer's travel. Find out more about how to set up your bookable product in our [NSW First Develop Guide](#).

This guide details how to sell your bookable tourism products directly to customers on your website and work with third party distributors like online travel agents to make your products widely available online.

Note: This guide aims to assist all tourism businesses, as each business is unique, the steps that you take to make your products bookable online may vary.



SELL DIRECTLY VIA YOUR WEBSITE

Providing your customers with live availability, product prices and an instant booking function has never been more important. This will not only ensure you never miss a potential booking for your accommodation, tour or activity, but the automated system does the work for you, saving time and often money. Today, booking online is a customer expectation. Obstacles like filling out a form or making a phone call to book may result in your customer choosing another product.

The time you save from streamlining your bookings allows you to focus on other aspects such as providing fantastic customer experiences.

MANAGING YOUR BOOKINGS ONLINE

To help you set up online sales, choose a booking software that can connect to your current website and is specialised for tourism businesses. This provides a 'book now' button on your website so customers can book directly with you. Booking software can help manage rates and inventory, provide instant confirmations, streamline payments and 'back of house' operations seamlessly. It can also help manage walk-ins and phone bookings.

The time you save from streamlining your bookings allows you to focus on other aspects of your business such as providing fantastic customer experiences.

As well as providing your website with a booking engine, many of these booking software options can also link, or *channel manage**, your live product availability to other online marketplaces, like online travel agents and local marketing websites, increasing your business reach and visibility.

Do your research to find the right booking software for your business. There are many available, offering different services at various price points.

For tours, attractions and activities some of these include: Rezdy, Bokun, Fareharbor, Booking Boss, and Bookeasy.

For accommodation, software can vary considerably. Some examples include SiteMinder, Little Hotelier, Levart, RMS, ResOnline and HiSITE.

Choosing the right software is often dependent on the size of your property – some software specialises in channel management and connects in real time to your property management system (PMS), assisting you to manage your rates as well as channel manage your inventory to other online platforms. For smaller properties, software like Little Hotelier can work as a PMS, booking engine and channel manage your inventory. Some of these options can integrate in different ways, providing a whole of business solution.



Promoting on Social Media

Promote your bookable experiences via your social media platforms so customers are directed back to your website to book your tourism products. For more information on digital marketing see:

- [Promote Your Tourism Business](#) guide
- Destination NSW [Social Media Guidelines](#)

Today, **booking online** is a customer **expectation**.



Improve your SEO

Booking software is also a great tool to improve your search engines ranking. Having a booking button on your site means more external websites will link to yours.

**Channel management is the process of managing online distribution channels in order to sell inventory (bookable tourism products) to various online travel agents across the world.*

SELL ONLINE VIA DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

The easier your products are to find and book – the more likely and more often they will get booked. Having your bookable products available across many websites significantly increases your reach. The channel management capability of your booking software will allow your inventory to be distributed to other online marketplaces, such as online travel agents, visitor information centres and destination marketing websites. Your distribution channels are powerful marketing tools.

DESTINATION MARKETING WEBSITES AND LOCAL DISTRIBUTION

- **Destination NSW**

[Get Connected](#) is Destination NSW's website membership program, showcasing tourism products on Destination NSW consumer websites [sydney.com](#) and [visitnsw.com](#), as well as [australia.com](#) and over 70 local and national travel websites. Get Connected is powered by the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW-Online) platform and is free of charge for NSW businesses tourism and event operators. Register here. Connect your website booking page to your listing and a 'book now' button will be available to tap into a large amount potential direct bookings.

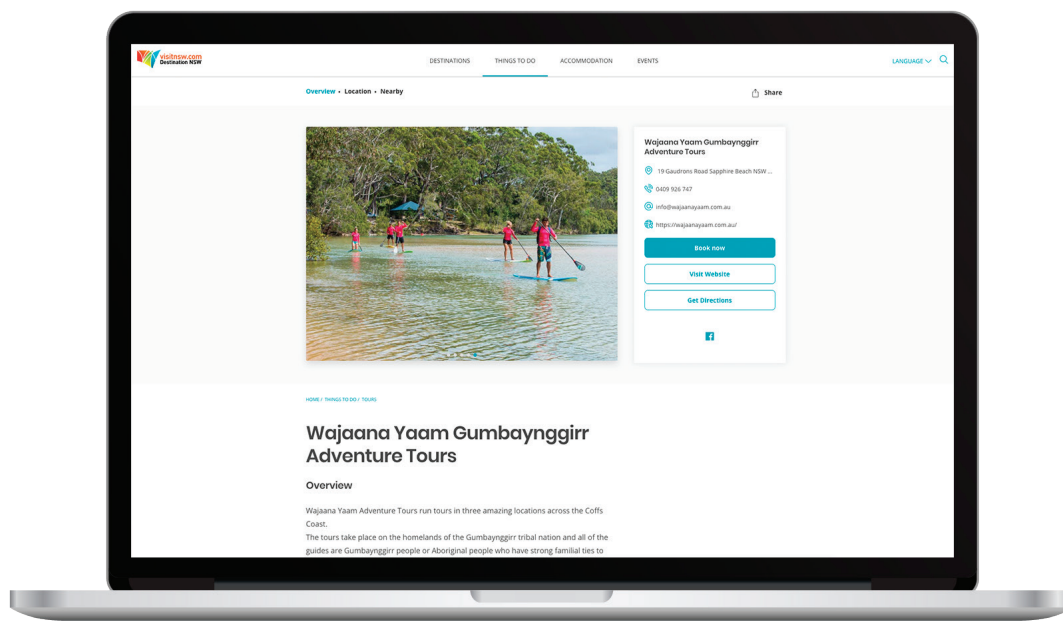
- **Visitor Information Centres**

Your local Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) is a trusted trip planning resource. Connect your tourism product with your local [AVIC](#) via [The Tourism Group](#) to increase bookings.

- **Local Tourism Organisations**

Keep your Local Government Agencies and tourism associations up to date with your business and reach out to see how you can connect to their website.

The easier your products are to find and book – the more likely and more often they will get booked.



Do you have any questions about Get Connected? Please call our helpline on 1300 655 077 or email getconnected@dnsw.com.au

SELL ONLINE VIA DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

ONLINE TRAVEL AGENTS

- An Online Travel Agent (OTA) is a travel website that specialises in the sale of travel products to consumers. Some OTAs may just sell accommodation such as [hotels.com](https://www.hotels.com), some like [Expedia](https://www.expedia.com) sell a variety of products including flights, hotels, car rentals, while others may specialise in tours, attractions and activities such as [Viator](https://www.viator.com) and [GetYourGuide](https://www.getyourguide.com).

Destination NSW partners with OTAs in Australia and many of our international target markets to run campaigns promoting NSW places and products.

For a tourism business, working with an OTA is like having a virtual sales team, providing you with access to their large customer base both in Australia and around the world. OTAs invest in recognised brands and global online platforms, content translation, in-travel apps, sales and marketing teams and campaigns, and search marketing to give listed products and destinations more visibility online. Connecting your booking software to your OTA partners means that customers can easily find your products with live availability and get the instant booking confirmation they have come to expect.

You will need to set up a distribution agreement with OTAs and provide availability through your booking software so they can resell your products at an agreed nett rate.

Research which OTAs will work for your business and ensure they target your ideal market. Like your other listings, it's important your business listing with an OTA is continually updated and accurate, including descriptions, imagery and videos.



Looking for more content?

Need content for your website and Online Travel Agent business listings? Access images, videos and copy on the [Destination NSW Content Library](#).

OTAs selling Australia tourism products include:

OTAs & experience websites	What products do they sell?	Apply to list your product
Expedia	Accommodation, car rental, tours, attractions	List your property List your experience
Get Your Guide	Tours, attractions	List your experience
TripAdvisor Experiences (Viator)	Tours, attractions	List your experience
Booking.com	Accommodation	List your property
Agoda	Accommodation	List your property
Trip.com	Accommodation	List your property
Red Balloon	Tours, attractions, activities, accommodation packages	List your experience
Klook	Tours, attractions	List your experience
Stayz	Accommodation	List your property
Adrenaline	Tours, activities, attractions	List your experience
AirBnB	Accommodation	List your property
AirBnB Experiences	Tours, activities	List your experience
Riparide	Accommodation (small, unique)	List your property

Note: This list is a sample of OTAs and experience websites that sell Australian tourism products but is not exhaustive of all OTAs in Australia. This list is not an endorsement by Destination NSW and future agreements are between your business and the OTA. Not all of these OTAs will be a match for your business and vice versa your product will need to be considered by the OTA.

SELL ONLINE VIA DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

COMMISSION: ONLINE DISTRIBUTION COSTS

Distribution refers to all the ways a product is sold to a customer. You may choose several distribution channels, such as your local visitor centre, tourism organisation, tour operators, OTAs and inbound tour operators.

Many of these partners will require you to pay a distribution cost or commission in exchange for selling your product – a percentage cost which is built into your retail rate.

Commission is a cost that you only pay when the distribution partner sells your product. Partnering with new distributors opens up your business to a wider range of customers and provides you with significant marketing support. This translates to more revenue, so it's a highly effective marketing tool with a favourable return.

- **How much commission will I pay?**

Commission levels vary between channels. Here is a general example of working with commissions with OTAs.

	Accommodation	Tours, Attractions and Activities
Online Travel Agents	10-20%	20-30%
Visitor Information Centres	0-15%	0-20%

Note: These are average commission levels.

- **Where does the commission go?**

The commission provided to OTAs goes towards their income, operation costs and is reinvested into marketing.

Some of the aspects include:

- » Mobile apps for bookings before and during travel
- » Content translated into multiple languages
- » Consumer marketing campaigns
- » Partner distribution platforms
- » Technology upgrades to continue meeting customer expectations
- » Research and insights for tourism businesses

In some countries, like New Zealand, OTAs also act as a wholesaler, selling products to travel agents, so you can reach an even wider audience.

Some OTA brands run multiple travel websites, making your domestic and global reach even larger. For example, having a listing with Expedia could mean your product is available for customers to book on websites such as hotels.com, Wotif, Travelocity and more.

OTAs typically employ local teams in Australia and work hard to drive travel bookings across NSW, which helps to grow the visitor economy.

Building a successful distribution strategy means finding the right balance between all the channels you use.

Building a successful distribution strategy means finding the right balance between all the channels you use. Therefore, it's important to have a mix of direct business and bookings made by distribution partners, so you're not paying commission on every booking.



Building commission into your prices

It's important to build in commission when you set the prices of your bookable products.

If you find that your margin is too thin to include commission, you might like to create some slightly higher-priced experiences with extra value added in, such as lunch, transfers, or a bottle of wine, allowing you to afford the commission.

See the [Inbound Guide](#) for more information.

Selling your bookable products online and building commission into your pricing provides you with the opportunity to work with many distribution partners, ensuring your bookable products are available widely.

To learn more about working with distribution partners, including Inbound Tour Operators, commissions and becoming export ready, take a look at the Destination NSW [Inbound Tourism Guide](#).

We wish you every success with your tourism business.

Sell Your Bookable Products Online is the fourth in the series of the NSW First Guides. To find out more about Developing your business, Promoting your business and Selling to international visitors go to destinationnsw.com.au/nswfirst

For more information about partnering with Destination NSW and to find all our resources available to your business, go to destinationnsw.com.au

