

HOW TO HOST A FAMIL

A famil is a familiarisation visit (also known as FAM) and is your opportunity to have the domestic and international travel trade, trade and consumer media experience your product first hand. Trade includes distribution partners, for example wholesalers, online travel agents (OTAs) and inbound tour operators, and media includes journalists and writers for print, broadcast and online media outlets.

Types of famil tours can include:

- Individual officer/agent/media.
- Hosted media (individual or group).
- Social Media influencers and bloggers.
- Colleagues from the same organisation (for example, Expedia or Fairfax).
- Agents from different agencies in a “Mega Famil” (for example, travel agents as part of the Aussie Specialist training program, where agents are split between states and destinations, then all come back together and share learnings).
- Pre and post famils for specific trade events (for example, the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE)).

Trade and media visits are often coordinated by your State Tourism Organisation (e.g. Destination NSW) or your local or regional tourism organisation. In addition, Tourism Australia’s International Media Program hosts approximately 1, 000 media representatives from almost 30 countries annually.

Visits are coordinated by publicists and communication teams and are supported by tourism operators who provide assistance with accommodation, meals, transport and tours. Generally support for famils is requested free of charge in return for the benefits for your business e.g. media coverage, exposure to travel trade. However, it is always a good idea to ask the organiser if there is a budget available.

Famils are education-based opportunities and all stakeholders involved need to understand that this is a major marketing opportunity. Coverage generated through PR is seen as credible and authentic and has a much broader reach than, in most cases, individual-business marketing reach.

FAMIL TOP TIPS

Treat a famil participant the way you would treat your customers and create a lasting impression:

- Do your research and know who is visiting.
 - Most likely you will have received a biography of the famil participant/s coming to visit, look them up and check out their publication or company, and their previous work.
- Make your first impression count
 - Ensure your staff are aware and briefed for who is coming and what the purpose is. Ensure that your venue is clean and tidy, and ready for their arrival.
 - Extend a warm welcome and welcome the famil participant/s into your business.
- Communication is key
 - Good communication ensures a successful experience for everyone involved - operator and famil participant. It’s important that you organise and communicate in a professional and



timely manner and pay particular attention to special requests that can be communicated in advance.

- Ask them questions
 - Ahead of the famil, understand what the famil participants need from the visit and tailor to present your business in the best light possible whilst addressing their needs. See where else they are going within the region and promote other operators.
 - Ask them for feedback on your product.
- Showcase your product
 - Showcase the best of your experience and what you have to offer - products, services and staff.
 - Highlight the key things you want the famil participants to remember and write about.
- Don't create a new experience
 - Give them an authentic and accurate experience that you offer to all customers and visits so that their readers can have that experience for themselves.
- Treat your guests as VIPs
 - Roll out the red carpet and ensure you give the famil participant/s a great customer experience so that they can be sure their customers will have the same. Ensure you create some surprises throughout to surprise and delight and make your business memorable
- Give them something to remember you by
 - Make it easy for famil participant/s to follow you on social media and share posts in real time from their experience.
- Follow up afterwards
 - Travel stories for print publications can take months to publish so you will need to be patient. With online publications, your story may appear sooner, so ensure you request to be notified when the story is uploaded so you can share the link through your own social media channels and website.
 - Send a thank you email with a personal note and link to access your marketing kit for media and trade kit for distribution partners.
 - Follow up any requests for additional information and ensure to keep them informed of any relevant updates to your product.
- Most of all, have fun.
 - If you don't enjoy yourself, the famil participant/s won't either.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

- Take the time to develop your marketing materials - it may be worth engaging a PR or Marketing professional to help deliver your content.
- Develop your Marketing Kit to include: Current media releases, fact sheets about your business and products, background on your company's history, recent awards, product biography and executive biography, latest brochures, high-resolution images (downloadable) of products, company logo, key staff etc, and media contact information.
- Consider your hook and identify what your unique pitch is.
- Identify a credible spokesperson who can be used for quotes and interviews.
- Make your media content shareable.
- Make contact with your STO media team to grow your relationship with the media.



TOOLS AND CONTACTS TO HELP YOU

- [Tourism Australia - Working With the Media](#)
- [Tourism Australia - Making a Splash](#)
- [Tourism Australia - Tourism Export Toolkit](#)
- [NSW First - Promote Your Tourism Business](#)
- [Tourism WA - Media and Trade Familiarisations](#)
- Key media contacts (to keep updated with new news from your business)
 - Tourism Australia - media@tourism.australia.com
 - Destination NSW - media@dnsnsw.com.au
 - Visit Victoria - pr@visitvictoria.com.au
 - Tourism and Events Queensland - henry.tuttielt@queensland.com
 - Tourism Tasmania - media@tourism.tas.gov.au
 - South Australia Tourism Commission - Amy.OShaughnessy@sa.gov.au
 - Tourism Northern Territory - Media.TourismNT@nt.gov.au
 - Tourism WA - media@westernaustralia.com