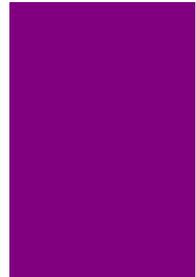
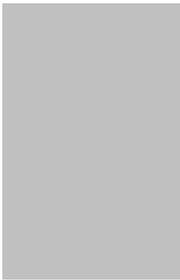


# KING ISLAND PLACE BRAND PROJECT

Sharing  
the  
King Island Way



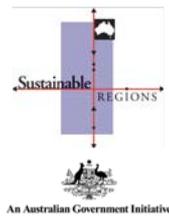
October 2006



# King Island Place Brand Project

Prepared for  
King Island Council

This project has been led by a steering committee with representatives from King Island Council, Cradle Coast Authority and the Tasmanian Department of Economic Development, and has been supported by the Australian Government's Sustainable Regions Program.



STATUS	DATE
V1 Steering committee review	29 Sept 06
V2 Stakeholder consultation	1 Nov 06
FINAL	15 Dec 06

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## Introduction

King Island has recognised that, in terms of its economic growth and future development, it is not capitalising on one of its greatest assets – its identity in the national and even the international marketplace as an island that produces premium cheese and beef and, to a lesser extent, seafood.

Unlike many larger places around the world, its dairy and beef proprietary brands have created an identity that establishes it as a place that stands for something. This foundation provides a remarkable opportunity to extend and build a place brand that benefits King Island more widely, from all of its industries to its community.

In working towards the development of a place brand, the aim is to go beyond a logo to a comprehensive approach that gives substance to something that has authentic value. This approach will be actively managed according to a defined vision that:

- is geared to the audiences that King Island targets;
- has the acceptance and support of product brand owners; and at the same time,
- is seen as real and relevant by those living on the island.

It is a slow process to deliberately build a place brand. This project is the starting point for King Island.



## The place

King Island is in Bass Strait between Victoria and Tasmania, and 55 minutes flying time from Melbourne or Tasmania's North West. It has a population of about 1,800 permanent residents, with the majority (800) living at Currie.

It is best known for its prime beef and dairy products, as well as seafood. The two major industries, in terms of employment, are the National Foods-owned King Island Dairy and Tasman Group, which processes beef from local producers at its King Island Meat Company.

The island's economic profile also includes Kelp Industries Pty Ltd, with 80-100 people involved in harvesting cast bull kelp in an industry that contributes annual income of about \$2m. to the island. Its tourism industry is largely service-based (accommodation and hire car providers), with the main focus on natural attractions such as the Calcified Forest and maritime heritage, presented through the island's Maritime Trail. Commercial attractions include the King Island Dairy cheese-tasting centre and local galleries and two operators provide tours on demand.

In addition, the potential of reopening the Grassy scheelite mining operation is being explored.

The island's infrastructure and services include an airport at Currie, hospital, District High School, hotel, restaurants, licensed clubs, supermarkets, bakery, service stations, and a Westpac bank branch.

It has an active community that includes a cultural centre fostering arts and crafts; clubs for golf, bowls, football, hockey, bridge, boating, gardening, diving and horse-riding; and organisations such as the King Island Tourism Association; King Island Regional Development Organisation; King Island Beef Producers Group; King Island Natural Resource Management Group; and active Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers' Association participation.

Its annual events calendar includes the King Island Racing Carnival, King Island Imperial 20 footrace, live theatre produced by King Island Dramatic Society and Regional Arts, King Island Show, Queenscliff to Grassy Yacht Race, King Island Open Golf Tournament, and the King Island District School market day.

Residents have a passionate attachment to the place, as evidenced during Future Directions workshops in 2003 and workshops conducted as part of this project, and a sense of independence and resourcefulness as a separate, self-contained island.

This is reflected in the King Island Council's vision:

"To preserve and improve the 'King Island Way', including freedom of opportunities, community friendliness along with personal and industry security in an environmentally sustainable way appropriate to King Island".



## Brand as the solution to a problem

Active brand development and management requires commitment and sustained effort. It is a solution, or part of the solution, to a problem.

This project has arisen from recognition that King Island has a set of issues that an island brand has capacity to address.

King Island is already a place Brand. It exists regionally, nationally and in a number of international arenas, as a set of associations largely established by its food sector: primarily cheese and more recently, through natural beef, seafood, and pure water.

Its Brand equity consists of a level of positive consumer knowledge generated through promotion of product brands such as King Island Dairy, King Island beef, and King Island Cloud Juice. The island is readily identified as the source of these products and is perceived to contribute to them through a natural, unpolluted environment.

King Island has also gained recognition for its seafood, particularly abalone and crayfish.

### LEVERAGING PRODUCT BRANDS

However, the success of the product brands has not been leveraged to advantage the island more broadly. This includes identified capacities for growth – the tourism industry, primary industry, and population growth, outlined in King Island Council's Strategic Plan 2004-2009. The plan sets the following targets and objectives, to:

- increase visitor numbers by 10% per year over 10 years;
- double the population by 2013 while maintaining the lifestyle that the community is accustomed to and known as the 'King Island Way'; and
- support initiatives to increase production in a sustainable manner, including encouragement for value-adding of primary produce.

### LOUDER VOICE

King Island has significant barriers to growth and development, including isolation from markets and the scale of its industries. Development of a place brand will help the island to cut through the 'white noise' of marketing communication and strengthen its image and appeal.

Active development and management of a place brand will also serve to strengthen governance and the capacity to attract funding, including the development and maintenance of strong partnerships with other tiers of government and related organisations, such as Cradle Coast Authority.



### **PROTECTING THE BRAND**

Understanding, defining and managing Brand King Island empowers brand owners – the King Island community, stakeholders and the council – to ensure that it is not impaired over time and that the values and strengths it stands for are protected.

At the same time, expansion of Brand King Island beyond reliance on awareness of a single product brand, such as King Island Dairy, is necessary to ameliorate the risk of a single bias.

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PRIDE AND COHESION**

Equally important is the internal perspective. Brand development shapes community perceptions and is a valuable tool for developing community pride through expression of local values and cultural identity.



## Where should it apply?

While Brand King Island can legitimately apply to all of the island's endeavours, the use of the Brand offers competitive advantage or strengthens competitive advantage for:

### FOOD SECTOR

Dairy products are the cornerstone of King Island's food sector. Dairying began on the island in 1902 with the establishment of a butter factory but now includes a range of hand-crafted cheeses, cream, yoghurt and dairy desserts.

King Island Dairy began exporting in the late 1990s, and its products have been sold in the United States, Japan, Asia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Now owned by National Foods, the King Island Dairy brand has been retained and promotion includes the [www.kidairy.com.au](http://www.kidairy.com.au) website, with a tagline of "pure indulgence from an isolated island" and a focus on the unpolluted environment, high quality milk, and island location and history.

In recent years, King Island has also established itself as a supplier of export-quality beef. Tasman Group Services Pty Ltd owns the King Island Meat Company and sells local beef nationally as well as exporting it to Japan, Taiwan and the United States. It has also built on a long tradition of the island's beef producers servicing the domestic market.

The island also harvests seafood that includes rock lobster, sea elephant oysters, king crabs, and abalone.

In addition, pure rainwater is gathered and sold under the King Island Cloud Juice brand for the national market and export to Europe and Japan.

While Kelp Industries supplies about 20% of the world's needs for bull kelp – exported primarily to Scotland and used for alginates in ice cream, cosmetics, milk desserts, and jellies – it is not a branded product, although the 'kelpies' or kelp harvesters are part of the island's cultural heritage and feature from time to time in tourism publicity.

### TOURISM

King Island has a small-scale tourism industry, consisting mainly of accommodation and service providers. It has limited capacity to fund promotion and its major direct efforts are a website ([www.kingisland.org.au](http://www.kingisland.org.au)), brochure and participation in consumer shows, while other marketing communications occurs through regional activities undertaken by Cradle Coast Authority and State-level marketing by Tourism Tasmania.

A review of marketing collateral, websites and editorial coverage shows that, typically, communication leads with King Island food ([www.discovertasmania.com](http://www.discovertasmania.com); "Gourmet treasures and Shipwrecks", *Inflight* magazine, autumn 2006), followed by its coastline, contemporary connections with the sea, and maritime heritage.



The only available marketing data<sup>1</sup> that is specific to King Island dates back to 1999. It shows that the majority of visitors were from Victoria (52.7%), with Tasmania (22.6%) and New South Wales (14.6%) making up the remainder. Of the total visitors, about half (51.5%) were on the island for leisure/holiday purposes, while 14.8% were visiting friends and relatives.

Of the leisure/holiday visitors, 69% were from Victoria, while business visitors were mainly from Tasmania (62%).

The data pre-dates the Internet boom and at that stage, the leading information source used to plan a trip to King Island was friends or relatives (40%), followed by maps, books and brochures (33%) and travel agent (29%).

Currently, the two main target markets for King Island are Lower Older and Older Affluent, although it also targets Young Singles and Couples, Short Breaks and Special Interest segments. The island's tourism industry has identified<sup>2</sup> three key experiences that appeal to the Lower Older and Older Affluent segments – escape and recharge (island life including slowing down, rejuvenating and relaxing); nature naturally (coastline, beaches, wildlife, fresh air) and special interest (fishing, sports events, golf by the sea, history).

## POPULATION GROWTH

King Island has recognised that its long-term economic sustainability depends on population growth. The King Island Council and industry sectors, in particular seek to attract:

- farmers;
- builders/tradespeople;
- self-funded retirees;
- nurses and health professionals;
- processors and factory workers;
- skilled workers for new and renewed industry sectors (e.g. mining); and
- chefs.

The council also recognises that the island lifestyle, friendly community and natural beauty has appeal for those seeking a lifestyle change, as well as artists seeking creative inspiration.

## INVESTMENT

Like many small communities, King Island seeks to attract investment that is compatible with the island's values. Key targets are tourism investors, exporters (particularly those interested in value-added products), agri-businesses, and residential developers who can improve the quality and availability of the island's housing stock..

<sup>1</sup> *King Island Travel Survey 1999*, Tourism Tasmania. King Island is currently conducting its own visitor survey and results are expected to be available in May 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *King Island Tourism Marketing Plan, 2002-2003*



## Existing perceptions and image

Limited research has been undertaken to analyse external perceptions of King Island as a place.

Brand DNA conducted consumer research in 2005 as part of the island's EMS Pilot Project for the King Island Natural Resource Management Group. It found that Australian consumers (across five mainland state capital cities) had positive perceptions of the King Island environment and level of environmental care:

“Despite there being no knowledge of any factual support or proof, by implication, farmers on the island are believed to be taking good care of the environment”.

The following assumptions of perceptions for Brand King Island targets are based on a web and editorial search, as well as anecdotal information. These assumptions require testing as brand development evolves.

Overall, the following comment on the Regional Food Australia website, [www.regionalfood.com.au](http://www.regionalfood.com.au), highlights the likelihood that one of the greatest issues for Brand King Island is that, beyond its dairy products and beef, there are few clear perceptions –

“What do you think of when you hear the words 'King Island'? Cheese almost certainly, beef as well. You probably think green pastures, clean ocean waters full of seafood and...? Exactly, not much else.

While perceptions will most likely vary across brand targets (see Table 1), the core elements are likely to be that King Island is a remote place with a clean, natural environment that is the basis of premium food; that it is small and peaceful but perhaps passive and lacking in vibrance; and beyond that, it is unclear what it has to offer.

This suggests that the Brand image is dated and somewhat clichéd (rural backwater). Therefore, the challenge is to ensure that a more balanced and contemporary understanding is communicated, simply and clearly, through a Brand that aspires to give King Island a more effective and memorable voice.



**TABLE 1 Perceptions of brand targets – preliminary**

<b>External Targets</b>	<b>Perceptions</b>
<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p>Potential visitors</p>	<p><i>Positive</i></p> <p>Great cheese; remote, small island; clean, rural environment; out of the way.</p> <p><i>Negative:</i></p> <p>Expensive, quiet and slow (passive), not much to do, hard to get to, don't know what it can offer me (physical/ emotional benefits), lacks energy and vibrance?</p>
<p>* Friends &amp; Relatives</p>	<p>* <i>Greater depth of understanding resulting from connections to those who live on King Island</i></p> <p><i>Positive</i></p> <p>Great cheese; remote island; interesting nature and walks; fascinating and friendly people; different way of living; easy to get to.</p> <p><i>Negative</i></p> <p>Not worth the effort and expense if not visiting friends/relatives; not enough to do.</p>
<p><b>Food sector</b></p> <p>Consumers</p>	<p>Premium cheese and beef; clean, natural; remote island; farmers taking care of the environment; authenticity of products.</p>
<p><b>Population growth</b></p> <p>Potential residents targeted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• farmers</li> <li>• builders/tradespeople</li> <li>• self-funded retirees</li> <li>• nurses &amp; health professionals</li> <li>• processors &amp; factory workers</li> <li>• chefs</li> <li>• lifestyle changers, artists</li> </ul>	<p><i>Positive</i></p> <p>Different to work on a small island; safe; outdoor activities; active, inviting community; meaningful and easy pace; island-ness; natural beauty; self-directed lifestyle.</p> <p><i>Negative</i></p> <p>Remote from friends/relatives; lack of entertainment; lack of work opportunities; isolation.</p>
<p><b>Investment</b></p> <p>Tourism investors</p> <p>Exporters (value-added products)</p> <p>Residential developers</p>	<p><i>Positive</i></p> <p>Quality raw produce; island lifestyle; natural beauty; active community; untapped potential.</p> <p><i>Negative</i></p> <p>Static (growth); cost of access to markets; cost of freighting materials to King Island; limitations on skill base.</p>



## King Island identity and values

### THE KING ISLAND WAY

A weekend search conference held at the end of 2003 identified a range of values held by the King Island community and industries. They included friendliness, freedom, safety and security, a sense of community, nature, quality of lifestyle, working together, and a 'can do' attitude.

Conference participants identified these values in combination as 'the King Island way':

"Every priority and strategy emerging from the conference is linked in some way to the maintenance and achievement of this powerful sense of identity, purpose, vision and brand".<sup>3</sup>

The King Island identity and values were explored further in July 2006, as part of this project, at a workshop using thematic communication methodology. It focused on the key meanings and messages that locals sought to convey externally about the island and its lifestyle. Workshop participants included tourism and business operators, representatives of industry groups, the arts, and King Island Council, as well as community interests.

Themes were:

- **On King Island, people matter more than things.**
  - "everybody waves to you"
  - "you're among friends"
  - "it's a generous island"
- **King Island is a place where quality not quantity is what counts – quality of produce, of the environment, of lifestyle and relationships.**
  - "you can be part of the fabric of island life and can gain a sense of connection with the community"
  - "you matter to the people you meet"
  - "it's a safe, healthy and natural environment"
  - "we produce great food because of the clean air and water, fertile soil, and the remoteness from pollution"
- **The need to survive inspires resourcefulness and creativity and so does the freedom of the island environment.**
  - "you'll see opportunities that you wouldn't in a city"
  - "on King Island, nothing is too hard"

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<sup>3</sup> Brand project proposal, King Island Council and Cradle Coast Authority, 2004.



- “people are passionate about life on the island and the diversity of its industries”
- **It’s a place that is home to those who live there but evokes a deep sense of coming home within, for those who visit.**
  - “you slow down, feel connected and get back into your own rhythm and then you start to feel better”
- **King Island provides a revitalising experience of stepping back in time, where the community is open and supportive, you can leave your car unlocked, the pace is comfortable, and the environment is healthy.**
  - “the island is part of your being – the magnetic attraction of land and sea”
  - “you can get involved, be part of it: it’s a simpler lifestyle with less stress, lots of opportunities to get outdoors and do things; let go the overload; discover what it’s like to be in a place where people trust each other”.

## HOW THE PLACE SEES ITS BRAND

A second group then described their understanding of Brand King Island. They identified –

### Core Values

The most highly prized values and their ranking were:

Community/Belonging 62, Environment (including island-ness) 41, Produce Quality 32, Safety 21, Freedom 18, Generosity 15, Creativity 12, Casualness 5, Contentment 5, Passion 4, Simplicity 4.

### Brand Benefits

Brand Benefits were seen to be:

Wellbeing, health, contentment, wealth (physical/spiritual), opportunity, sense of safety, happiness, generosity, creativity.

### Key Attributes

These were considered the flagship Attributes that most strongly delivered on the Core Values and Benefits:

- quality, authentic produce
- natural environment (including Roaring 40s and rain)
- Bass Strait island lifestyle/quality of life/pace of life (“King Island time”)
- authentic community



- history
- people
- remote location
- microcosm of habitats
- art & craft

### **Brand Personality**

Personality traits for the Brand were:

Laidback, friendly, strong, proud, sense of humour, the real thing (no pretence), honest, male but with a sensitive, nurturing edge; rugged, wise, straightforward, mid-30s, soul-searching.

### **Brand Essence**

In attempting to arrive at the Essence – or central organising thought for the Brand’s internal and stakeholder audiences – the group described the Brand as:

“King Island is the real thing, with no pretence. It nurtures your soul and is generous – both giving and challenging. It’s proud, authentic, honest and associated with creating quality produce. The quality is about more than produce, though. It’s about people and lifestyle. It’s home to a special few. It’s in Bass Strait, in the Roaring 40s and at 40deg.”

The Brand Essence that King Islanders identify with can be summed up as:

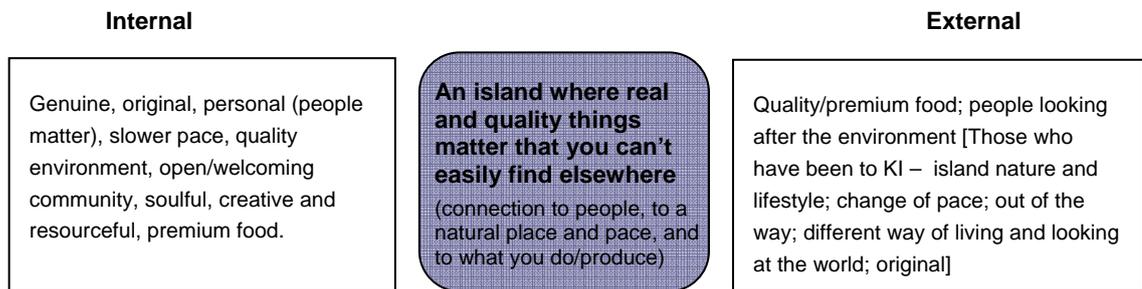
A quality island demonstrated through produce, engaging people, a connected way of life, and a natural environment – all in a remote though accessible location.



## The Brand proposition

### WHAT IS TRUE TO ALL TARGETS?

In considering the perceptions of the King Island community itself and the key targets in tourism, the food sector, and for population growth and investment, the meeting point for internal stakeholders and external targets is:



While none of these qualities alone differentiate King Island, its strength lies in the way it combines them – quality produce and a quality island lifestyle where people are closely connected to others, to the natural environment, to what they do for a living, and to a pace that enables appreciation of it all.

### PREMIUM BY NAME AND NATURE

As part of ongoing Brand King Island development, the understanding of what constitutes premium in an island context will need to be clearly defined and communicated to help ensure there is a shared understanding of this on the part of potential and existing Brand owners.

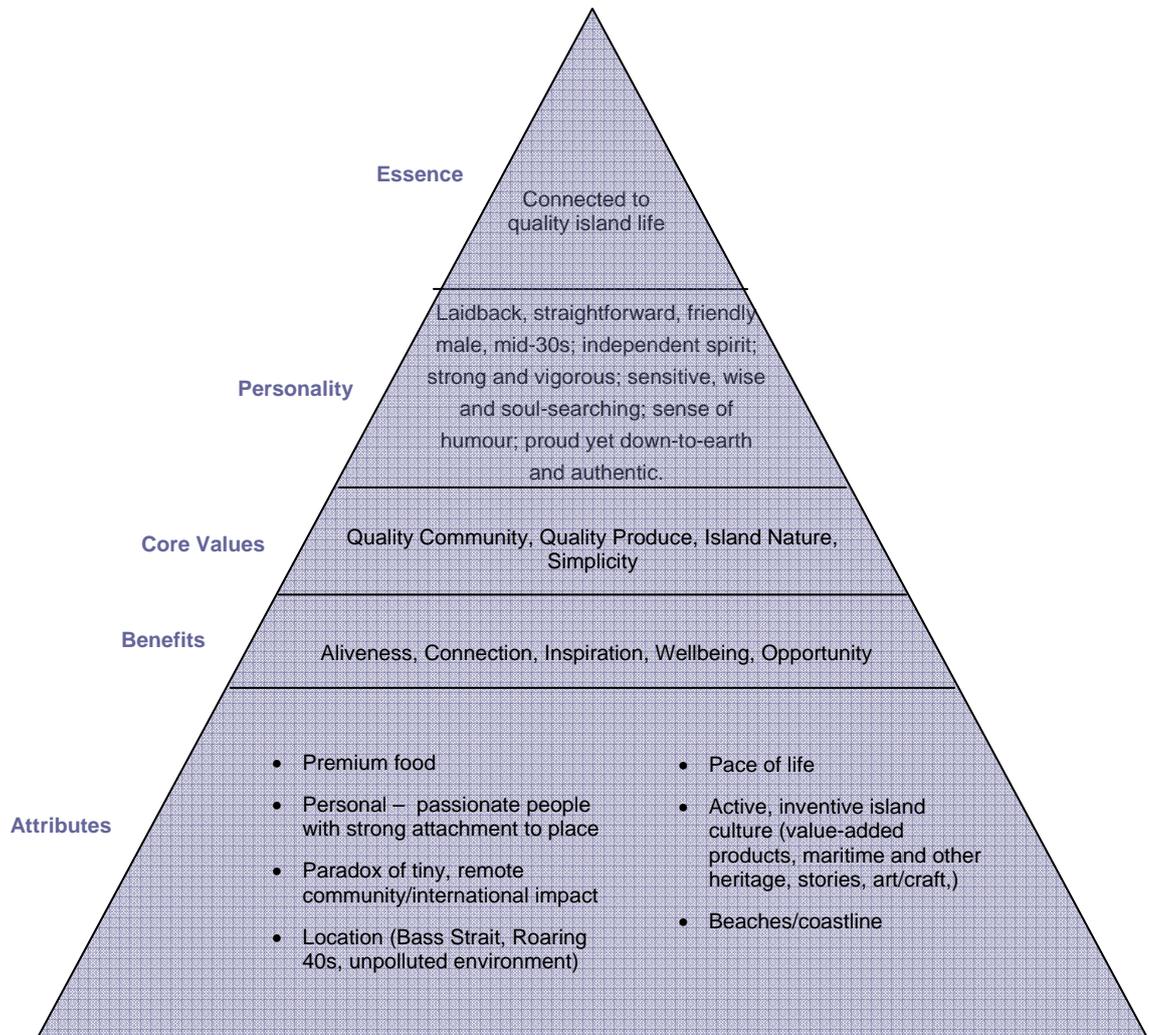
At present, the leading product brands are working on the basis of a definition of premium that incorporates the quality of the product itself, the natural environment and its relationship to the product, with a suggestion of products as handcrafted or boutique. This may need to be refined over time.

### PROPOSED BRAND MODEL

The Brand model focuses on the quality of the island's produce and its way of life, supported by a friendly community and natural environment; and the inventiveness of surviving and thriving on a small, remote island.

Brand King Island needs to be sufficiently strong and compelling to overcome barriers around distance and the stereotyping that 'small and out of the way' equals 'boring' and 'nothing happening'.

The proposed brand model is:



## BRAND OFFER

Who will be interested in the Brand? Across all targets, this is likely to be people who already enjoy King Island premium products like cheese, beef and rainwater; who want a way of life that gives them the chance to make real and deep connections through relationships/families, the work they do, and the island sense of place; who seek depth and aliveness rather than 'buzz'.

The Brand proposition therefore is:

King Island invites you to make connections with the precious qualities and aliveness of island life.



Inherent in this proposition is both a challenge and a vision for the island – to change the way it presents itself, leading to an image that is more interactive and revealing about what is precious about the ‘King Island way’; and to live up to the behaviour that demonstrates this informal capacity to share and the more formal sharing, such as through tourism products.

## IMPLICATION FOR TARGETS

### Food consumers

The value that Brand King Island can contribute to island product brands is to extend the association of premium products made in a natural island environment to incorporate a connection with a way of life that we as consumers can aspire to or seek to be associated with.

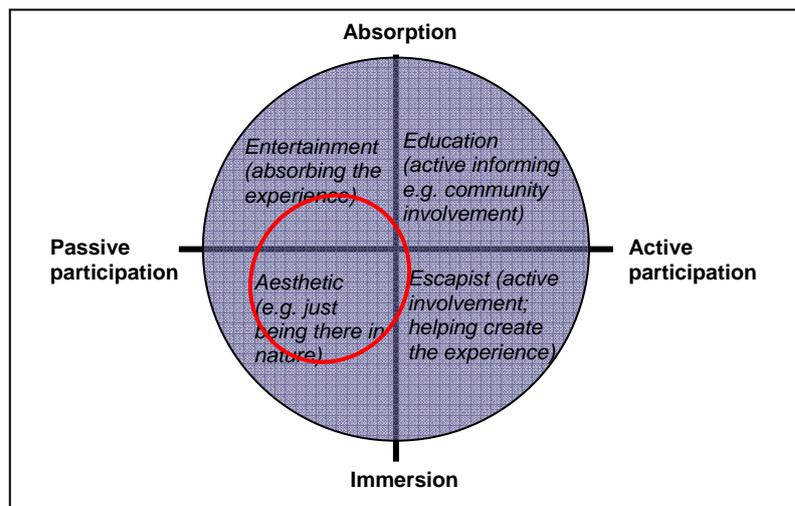
This connection has potential to be a two-way relationship between consumer and brand, with consumers also feeling that through purchasing the products, they can contribute to the sustainability of a small, meaningful, resourceful community. They are not products associated with a ‘faceless’ corporate entity but with a personal, intimate island.

Brand King Island has the potential to create a stronger off-site King Island experience, whether the consumer is in a Sydney restaurant or a New York retail outlet.

### Tourism

King Island’s current holiday experience positioning is relatively passive with limited opportunity to enter into or be physically part of the island’s way of life, as indicated below. When involvement does occur, it is likely to take the form of an interaction with a customer service provider (e.g. accommodation, car hire, café or restaurant).

Most of the King Island holiday experience relates to its natural environment and fits within the realm of the aesthetic – viewing and being out in it. Exceptions include guided tours and cheese tasting at King Island Dairy.



Experience realms chart adapted from “The Experience Economy”, B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore



In terms of the tourism experience, Brand King Island is aspirational. To be more competitive, the industry will need to provide more active opportunities for visitors to enter into the “precious qualities and aliveness of island life”. It will need to give a stronger, clearer reason to ‘buy’ King Island as a holiday experience.

This includes greater access to the very things that have put the brand on the map: local food. This extends to the people/stories behind the produce.

It also requires the development of niche tourism experiences that give visitors a genuine taste of island life and the opportunity to connect with islanders.

Critical to delivery of the Brand in a tourism context will be improvement of existing products to provide an appropriate level of quality, as well as the development of new products that deliver the Brand promise. As one stakeholder has reflected: “King Island as a tourism experience does not currently reflect the romance of the products out there”.

Brand King Island’s definition of quality, in a tourism sense, is not about five-star infrastructure but about the quality of the visitor experience, relevant to its key market segments. This includes customer service that is professional while reflecting the Brand and the character of King Island.

### **Potential Residents**

Brand King Island offers potential residents connection to community and an island environment; a change of pace; a safe place in which to raise a family; the opportunity for less stress and greater depth of relationships; outdoor recreation; the chance to be part of an active social network; self-fulfilment and wellbeing.

However, the value proposition is offset by barriers that include the cost of living, lack of suitable housing, distance from extended families and friends, and cost of travel ex-King Island.

### **Investment**

In terms of potential investors, Brand King Island must have a confident identity and be clear about its direction and the strength of what it offers. Active development and management of the place brand provides an important foundation for investment and demonstrates commitment to a positive investment climate.



## Supporting the promise

### STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Brand development cannot occur in isolation of other strategic planning and development for King Island, which has identified three allied priorities – tourism growth; further development of the island's primary industries, in particular greater value-adding; and development and implementation of population growth measures.

Critical to all of these is the need to maintain the health of the island's environment and to expand the on-island availability of local produce.

In terms of environmental management, the King Island EMS Pilot Project is currently developing a framework, environmental benchmarks and associated monitoring for key asset areas of biodiversity, land, and water. These benchmarks and monitoring standards are expected to be completed by late April 2007.

### CONSISTENT MESSAGE, CONSISTENT IMAGE

For King Island to give a clear understanding about what it stands for as a place and what it offers to its targets, it will need to develop a consistent message and set of underpinning 'stories', consistent communication tone, and a defined visual identity to be applied consistently.

This will require both the creation of a visual and verbal identity that 'speaks' to the Brand audiences, and agreement from key stakeholders to adopt this identity in relevant communications.

### ONE GALVANISING IDEA

Part of the challenge for a place brand, in breaking through the mass of information in the marketplace, is to generate a strong idea that is bold enough to capture attention, both with the media – which depends on discovering and promoting new ideas – and with those the brand targets.

One example is Coles Bay in Tasmania, which attracted international publicity for its decision to ban plastic bags. Inherent in this move is the message that Coles Bay and the Freycinet Peninsula values its environment and is prepared to take a stand, even by going against accepted practices elsewhere.

In terms of Brand King Island, the King Island Council's decision to ban tree farming as a means of preserving its prime agricultural land is in a similar vein. This publicity gives the impression that it is a place that, despite its size, will take on big corporations to protect its lifestyle and livelihood.



A goal of the island's place brand development should be to identify and execute an imaginative, galvanising idea that either strongly symbolises what the island is about and/or is an attraction in its own right. This is particularly important for a place the size of King Island, where marketing resources are limited and the capacity to gain attention in the media is even more so.

“... they are simply magnetic ideas that seize the imagination and are compelling by their very nature”.

– *Simon Anholt, Managing Editor, Place Branding, issue 2, April 2006.*

Creative ideas could include consideration of a way to use Currie airport, for example, as a form of attraction. Unlike most other places, the airport is at the heart of the island's life and has a social function that distinguishes it from airports elsewhere. As one participant in a branding workshop says:

“The airport is like a party. It's where you meet everyone, have a chat, socialise”.



## Brand framework

Brand King Island contributes to Brand Tasmania, through the food and beverage sector; to Tasmania's tourism master brand, and the regional brand, now known as Tasmania's North West. King Island food and rainwater is included in Brand Tasmania promotional activities and its tourism industry is part of marketing activities conducted by Tourism Tasmania and Tasmania's North West.

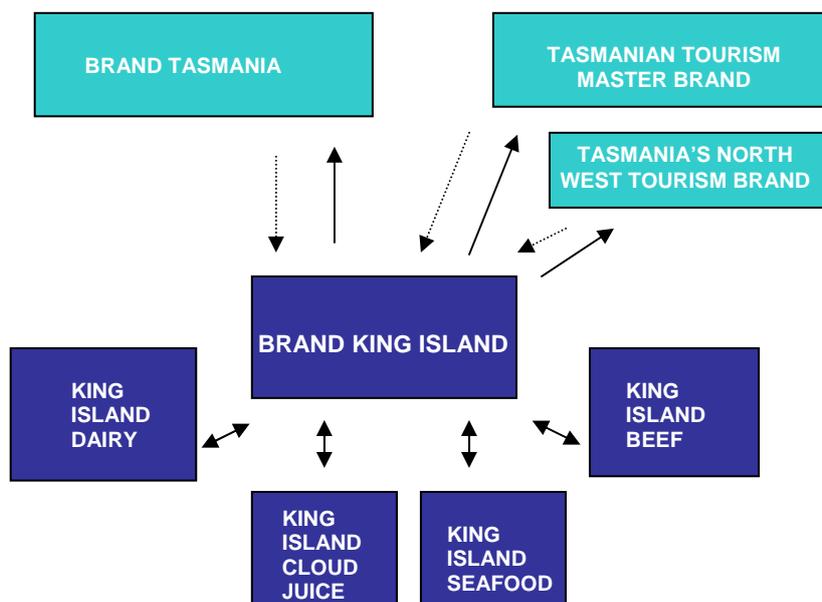
However, it is unclear to what degree the Tasmanian brand adds value to King Island's dairy, beef, seafood and rainwater product brands.

From a tourism perspective, the Tasmanian tourism master brand and the regional tourism brand support Brand King Island. However, it is questionable if the strength of external associations relate to King Island as part of Tasmania, as opposed to the destination as a stand-alone island.

This suggests that the external representation of the relationship between Brand King Island and Brand Tasmania/Tasmanian tourism master and regional brands is one where King Island leads and Tasmania or Tasmania's North West is subsidiary.

King Island's internal identity is first and foremost as an independent island, rather than an intrinsic part of Tasmania. Islanders themselves typically identify with Victoria and its capital city of Melbourne, rather than Tasmania or Hobart, despite air services linking both cities with Currie. King Island sees itself as neither part of Tasmania or Victoria but as "a place in its own right".

### KING ISLAND BRAND RELATIONSHIPS





## Establishing a structure

### STEWARDSHIP AND STRUCTURE

The development to date of Brand King Island has been incidental to development of product brands and in terms of active market profile, is owned largely by these proprietary brands. To achieve extension of Brand King Island beyond associations that have been established by the product brands will require a more encompassing 'ownership' and management structure.

Models for place brand ownership and management nationally and internationally involve formal and informal partnerships or development companies and corporations.

They range from the establishment of independent brand companies – such as Ireland's West Cork region, which saw its economic development body, West Cork LEADER Co-op Society establish Fuschia Brands Ltd – to volunteer private and public sector management groups, usually led by or including significant involvement from brand champions.

Both the Yarra Valley and Brand Tasmania (see Appendix A case studies) have established brand partnerships through management groups that lead brand management activities, define and oversee membership criteria, establish and implement communication strategies, foster industry support for their respective brands, and act as a 'watchdog' in terms of protecting the brand and its values. In both these cases, the structure includes the employment of an executive officer with marketing experience.

“Do not let the government run it. Create a structure that is going to be there when the government changes.”<sup>4</sup>

Commonly, brand management groups and their activities are provided with seed funding by government and are required to develop a business plan aimed at future self-sufficiency, to be achieved through membership fees and industry support.

In all cases reviewed, the management structure and level of mandate – such as a licensing system for membership and use of brand tools – reflected the local context and was a response relevant to the brand needs.

“The form of partnership organisation and operation is rarely a 'given'. It has to be negotiated and agreed by those who are going to be involved.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *International Trade Forum issue 1/2003, Natalie Domeisen.*

<sup>5</sup> Paper presented by Malcolm S. Allan, Director of U.K.-based Placebrands Ltd, *Spirit in Business* forum 2004.



## PROTECTION AND PROTOCOLS

Brand protection measures in use elsewhere include:

- registration of the brand name;
- registration of a trademark to provide a unifying brand identity for disparate members or industries;
- member licensing for use of a trademark and/or brand manual, including guidelines;
- implementation of a code of practice that establishes standards;
- membership criteria to establish standards (e.g. requirement that a percentage of product input be from the place, to protect brand integrity); and
- the use of 'soft power', whereby the brand management group or individual members work with industry members to address brand-related issues.

## MANAGING BRAND KING ISLAND

Given the scale and structure of King Island's industries, a co-operative approach is likely to achieve the buy-in and commitment that will be essential for Brand King Island to be actively developed, tested and implemented in a sustained manner.

One of the defining characteristics of King Island is its independent spirit, coupled with an ethos of active involvement in its own affairs. This suggests that a private and public sector partnership-based brand management group, including key stakeholders, would be an appropriate starting point and potentially, the most effective long-term body.

Like many other small regional areas, King Island lacks the critical mass to support significant marketing networks and expertise, and it will be important for its brand management group to consider how this can be 'imported', through its stakeholders or other means.

The key challenge will be to recruit stakeholders who not only recognise the value and necessity of a strategically-led place brand but who are willing to unite behind a shared purpose and vision for the brand, beyond individual interests.

The degree to which the brand management group seeks to provide direction to those associated with Brand King Island in terms of achieving quality standards or complying with ultimate Brand guidelines will need to be negotiated as part of the group's process of defining its shared purpose, and as part of the group's assessment of the most effective means of establishing a cohesive strategy and sound working relationships.

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The effectiveness of an active Brand King Island will be diminished if stakeholders representing key interests are not engaged in the Brand leadership process. These interests include product managers, industry and community representatives.



## Implementation

King Island Council has appointed a Special Projects Officer to implement a number of recommendations arising from the 2003 Future Directions process. It is likely that the officer will provide executive support to any Brand King Island leadership group, as well as play a significant role in carrying out activities identified by such a group.

Immediate implementation steps include:

ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
		2006
Initial contact with key industry and community stakeholders to canvas support and disseminate project information.	Immediate	KI Council
Formal briefing of stakeholders/meeting to determine support for Brand King Island.	December	KI Council
		2007
Determine three-year operational budget	February	KI Council & funding partners
Develop terms of reference for leadership group	March	KI Council
Appointment of leadership group	March	KI Council
Inaugural meeting of leadership group/ determination of vision, immediate agenda and meeting cycle etc.	April	KI Council & leadership group
Group to identify priorities/three-year strategic plan	by July	Leadership group



## Appendix A – case studies

See attachment