

Campaign Brief  
Reconnect with  
**Central Otago**



## Current Situation

This campaign brief is prepared by Tourism Central Otago (TCO) who are reacting to and adjusting their activities responding to COVID-19 and its economic and social impact across all sectors of the Central Otago Community. This document outlines the current situation together with a high-level plan for a return to destination marketing as travel restrictions permit.

The global COVID 19 pandemic threat in New Zealand has stopped tourism throughout the country for an unknown as yet period of time. In Central Otago businesses saw their revenues virtually cease overnight as the country entered a full lock down at Alert Level 4 on 26 March 2020 with 48 hours notice.

A number of hospitality and retail / service businesses re-opened after the country transitioned to alert level three rules on Tuesday 28 April 2020. Alert level 3 rules continue to require strict adherence to physical distancing together with limited people movement. Therefore, there is very little market opportunity and some businesses have chosen to re-open more as a service to their community than a viable way to operate their businesses.

Most tourism businesses remain unable to operate – either due to alert level restrictions or a lack of any viable tourism visitor market.

New guidelines for Alert Level 2 were announced 7 May 2020 that confirm domestic travel will be permitted once the country moves to operate at that level. International borders will remain closed to all but New Zealanders for the foreseeable future.

There are multiple restrictions that will affect how people can move and experience locations outside their home base at alert level 2. Airlines have yet to determine what services will be available and there will be additional operational costs incurred for all businesses to meet the new guidelines. There is no indication as to when and what will allow the country will move to level 1, however the best advice to date would suggest late 2020 at the earliest.

# Immediate Marketing Response – current state

The government established a four-tier alert level system for managing the risk of COVID 19. As New Zealand entered into Alert Level 4, Tourism Central Otago staff were redeployed to tasks within the Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) welfare and communication teams. They have also continued to progress key strategic projects including the new centralotagoz.com website and the Central Otago Touring Route. They have provided regular updates and important information to the Central Otago business sector utilising E-newsletters, phone / email contact and social media tools.

As the alert levels change the opportunity to market Central Otago changes with it in accordance with the table below. At every point any approach to marketing is checked through multiple lenses – the most important factor being safety of our communities.

Alert Level 4	Alert Level 3 (current)	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 1	No Alert Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TCO staff active in EOC Response Roles</li> <li>• Provision of immediate essential business support information via E Newsletters, Website, Facebook and 'Zoom' sessions.</li> <li>• Maintain progress for key strategic project delivery – Spring / Summer 20/21</li> <li>• Maintain high level Central Otago brand awareness activity with focus on community pride and local audience that is appropriate to the current situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to reduce TCO staff involvement with EOC roles where possible.</li> <li>• Continue regular E communication to business</li> <li>• Maintain progress for key strategic project delivery – Spring / Summer 20/21.</li> <li>• Release inspirational 60 second video</li> <li>• Development of a marketing campaign concept and brief for activation across future levels based on known factors / data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to reduce TCO staff involvement with EOC roles.</li> <li>• Continue regular E communication to business</li> <li>• Maintain progress for key strategic project delivery – Spring / Summer 20/21.</li> <li>• Launch digital campaign targeting immediate local and self-drive domestic market.</li> <li>• Provision of needs based training opportunities in partnership with providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue regular E communication to business</li> <li>• Maintain progress for key strategic project delivery – Spring / Summer 20/21.</li> <li>• Full scale campaign to reach greater South Island / North Island / Australia (NB Air routes trans tasman re-open and ZQN / DUD airports operational)</li> <li>• Provision of needs based training opportunities in partnership with providers.</li> <li>• Participation in tactical partnership campaigns as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destination Management and Marketing operating in line with new visitor environment</li> <li>• Participation in tactical partnership campaigns as appropriate.</li> </ul>

# Future Visitor Market - post COVID 19

Current research and thinking suggests that COVID 19 lockdown restrictions and ongoing messaging highlighting fear of future infections will change people’s travel choices for months and years to come.

It is likely that people will avoid more densely populated urban areas and crowds. They will seek experiences and locations that enrich their mental wellbeing and allow for quality time spent with loved ones.

Tourism Central Otago’s existing strategy and visitor persona research validates that this region is perfectly positioned with offerings aligned to people’s future needs:



**Wide open space**



**Slower speed for busy lives**



**Authentic quality experiences**



**Natural beauty and charm**



**Focus on the outdoors and wellness**

# Tourism Strategy Priority Projects

The priority projects in the tourism strategy are more valid post COVID 19 than ever. The only exception in the short-term being Eventful Central. It is most likely events initially will be micro events such as family celebrations, club get togethers etc.

<p><b>Digital Shopfront</b></p> <p>Re-invent how travellers find out and feel about visiting Central Otago with a single digital portal</p>	<p><b>i-SITE Review</b></p> <p>Undertake a comprehensive review of i-SITES and the role that they play in providing visitor information and inspiration</p>	<p><b>Building our Brand Identity</b></p> <p>Leverage ‘A World of Difference’ regional identity and create a creative strategy and campaigns that are relevant to visitor markets</p>	<p><b>Wine and Food Tourism</b></p> <p>Leverage growth in wine and food tourism and Central Otago’s ultra-premium positioning in summer fruits, wine and food</p>
<p><b>Eventful Central</b></p> <p>Advance the region’s events calendar by growing, developing and attracting events</p>	<p><b>Joining the Dots</b></p> <p>Improved transport linkages for visitors travelling to and through Central Otago – emphasis on touring route</p>	<p><b>A Virtuous Cycle</b></p> <p>Leverage the current position of OCRT to develop a co-ordinated approach to the promotion of all regional trails</p>	<p><b>Join the Club</b></p> <p>Drive the development of internal and external industry partnerships that will enable us to amplify our promotional efforts</p>

# Central Otago Visitor Persona Research

The visitor persona's previously identified as being most likely to appreciate Central Otago's tourism offering remain valid as the target market. The drivers and passions have not changed for them despite the impact of COVID 19.



## Escape & relax

Peaceful  
No hassle  
Nature  
Time out



## Bond

Fun  
Friends  
Family



## Explore & discover

Discover  
Hidden secrets  
Off the beaten track  
Adventure



## Prestige & status

Special  
Exclusive  
Best/Most/Only  
Luxury



## Challenge & achievement

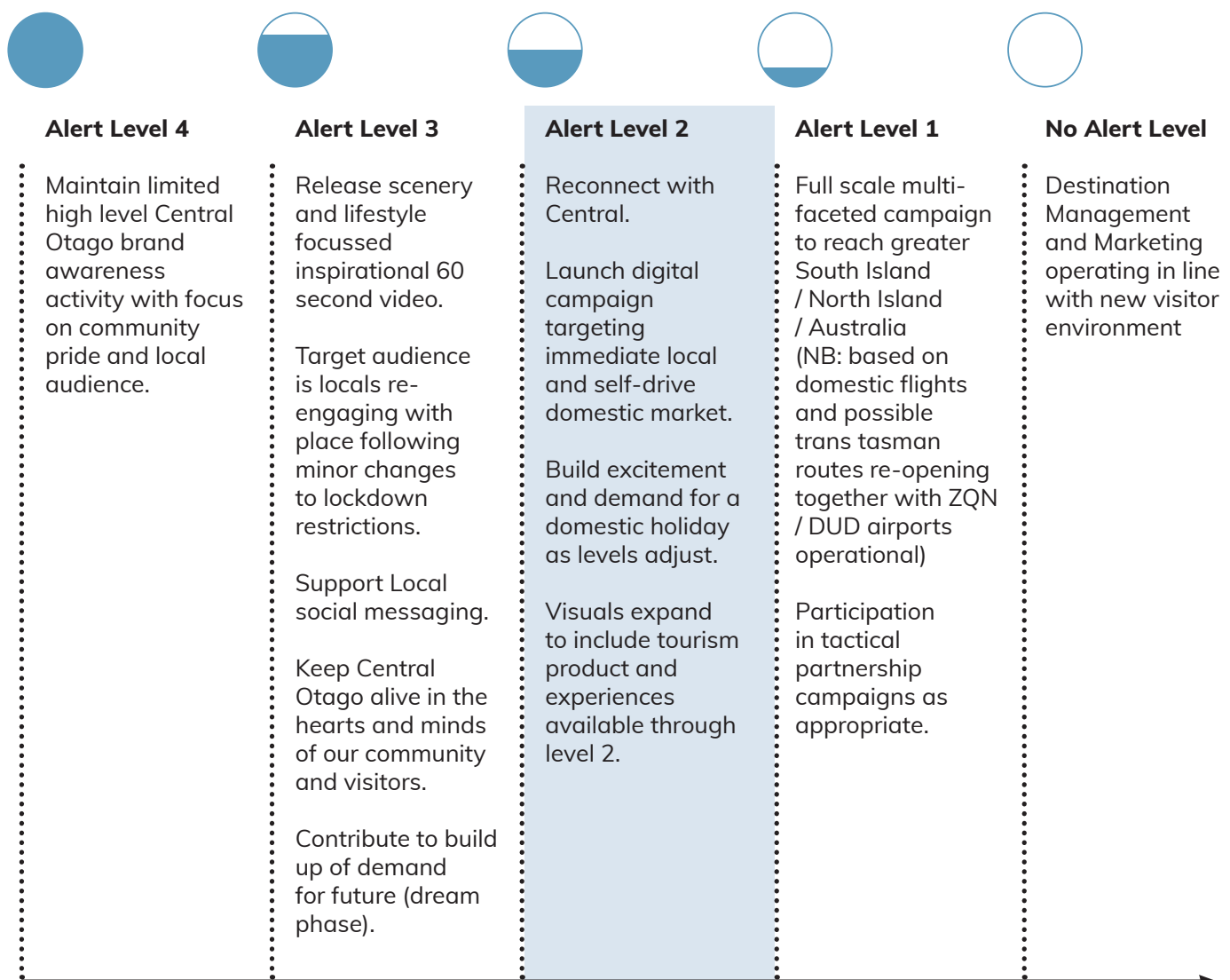
Test  
Challenge  
Achieve  
Fit  
Highest/hardest

Click [Here](#) for Full Visitor Persona Report

# A Marketing Campaign with scale and versatility

'Reconnect with Central' will be the essence of TCO's return to destination marketing. It is essential that the campaign is scalable, versatile and can utilise assets already available to keep costs as low as possible.

'Reconnect with Central provides versatility in how it is applied across the different alert levels with messaging and imagery that is appropriate to key messages and audience at each stage.



# Key visuals and messages for ‘Reconnect with Central’



## Wide open spaces

*Physical distance comes naturally to us*



## Wellness and the outdoors

*It's simply how we live life*



## Authentic

*Tourism is about people and the majority of our tourism experiences are owner operated.*

## Reconnect with



### Open spaces

We know visitors will be seeking to experience wide open and uncrowded spaces. Imagery will feature this but also show people in place to ensure the audience knows they can access and experience what they see.



### History

It is easy to play to our strengths as a region utilising assets that already exist. COVID-19 has awakened a renewed respect for the resilience and stoicism of past generations in the face of adversity. Central Otago's visual landscape, towns and people are truly authentic and true to the essence of Central Otago.





## Community

Show people enjoying the way of life in Central Otago. Give them a sense that it could be them. An opportunity to highlight different parts of the region through a series of visuals that may not be so well recognised.



## Family

Highlight family friendly activities that will appeal to the local and self-drive markets who have had children at home for an extended period of time. Acknowledges the emotional demands of this event and the focus of most people on family relationship and support.



## Activity, Trails, Wine and Food

Ensure our key and unique product mix including cycling, wine and food features throughout the campaign. They are a strength for the region and meet the needs for outdoors, wellness and connection.



## Friends

Highlight product and experiences that present an opportunity to reconnect with friends in a safe way. After weeks and months where people have been unable to spend time together in person the options for enjoying time and activities together in a safe environment will be in demand.

# Reconnect with Central

## Campaign Channels and Activation Example/s

The campaign will incorporate existing brand statements together with visuals and appropriate 'alert level' messaging.

This is primarily a digital campaign targeting direct to consumer inspiring them during the 'dream phase'. Strong on imagery and video, digital is the most cost-effective and measurable method to get the greatest reach and to drive interest and engagement.



## Central Otago NZ

May 2 at 4:30 AM



Thank you Central Otago – we're proud of how we've all come together over the last six weeks. We're looking forward to how we can all reconnect as a community with our favourite local places, people and experiences when conditions allow.

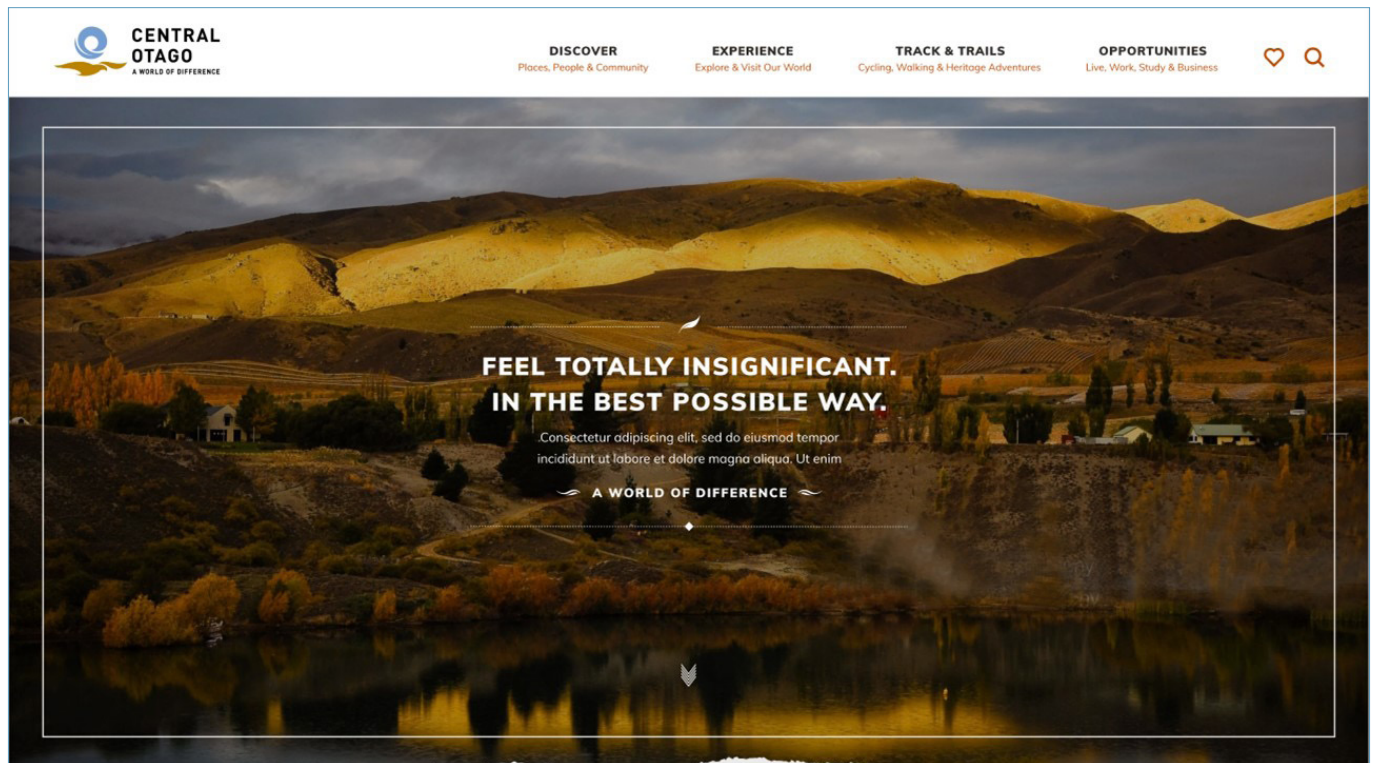
Show or tell us how you and your bubble are reconnecting with Central this weekend in the comments below.

[#centralotagonz](#) [#aworldofdifference](#)



# Campaign integration of strategic projects

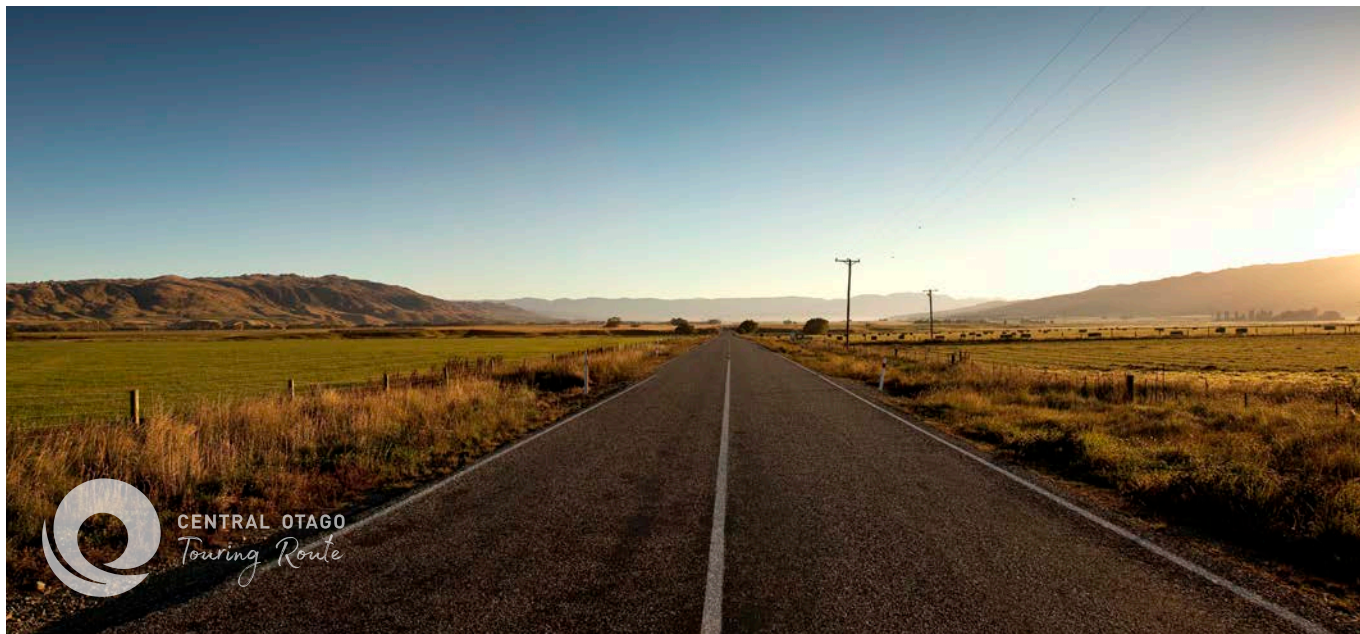
## May 2020: New CentralOtagoNZ website platform activated



## Spring 2020: Revised Eat.Taste.Central format



**November 2020:  
Launch Central Otago Touring Route**



**Summer 20/21:  
Lake Dunstan Trail Opens**





## Media / PR

The traditional media landscape has been significantly impacted in the fallout from COVID 19 and this is likely to continue with many mainstream mastheads disappearing from New Zealand readership.

TCO is receiving expressions of interest from a range of media on projects aimed at stimulating New Zealanders to travel in their own country. TCO will only explore further secure outlets where the audience aligns with target personas and with reach to locations appropriate to any travel restrictions.

Warner Bros NZ has been in contact with TCO regarding plans for broadcast of a domestic travel series on mainstream NZ television with the intention of including Central Otago.

Digital media opportunities will be considered after careful assessment of audience, engagement and 'message style' to ensure authenticity is maintained.

## Travel Trade

There is a role for this important distribution network in the medium term despite the issues the sector is facing with current border closures. Undoubtedly there will be amalgamations and/or some closures. When people are ready to travel again the security of booking through a reputable 'agent' will likely be key to their decision making.

TCO will re-engage with key trade beginning at Alert Level 2. Initially through personalised contact and provision of digital assets.

Online trade training and trade appropriate product assets aligned with the 'Reconnect with Central Campaign' will be actioned later in 2020. A Trade focussed promotional video will be a component of the assets to be developed.

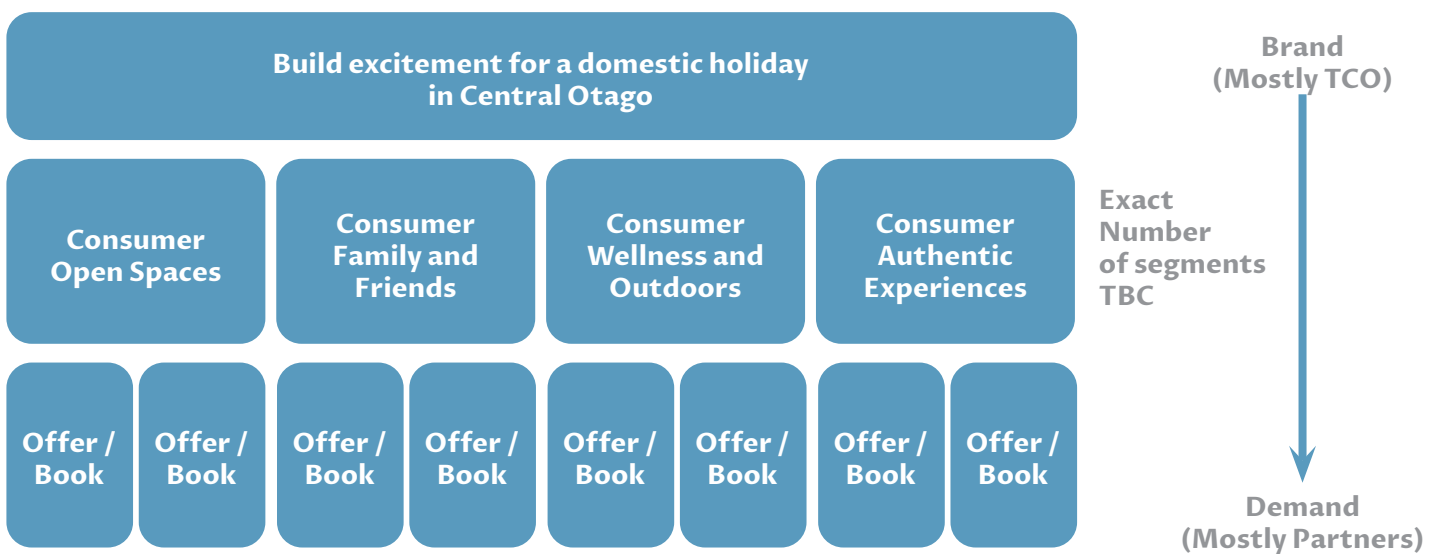
In person sales calls are unlikely to be undertaken until 2021 at the earliest. Until that time online platforms will be utilised to keep Central Otago front of mind for bookings.

# Partnerships - Local:

Central Otago’s operators will be essential to the success of the Reconnect with Central Campaign. TCO’s role is to build demand and excitement for people considering a holiday through the dream and plan stage. Operators must be engaged for the ‘Offer and Book Stage’.

TCO is working with CODC’s Economic Development Manager to achieve a cross sector response for the broader benefit of our local economy.

It has also engaged with community lead business and promotions groups to explore additional opportunities through those networks.



# Partnership – Regional and National Level

The 'Reconnect with Central' campaign is deliberately designed initially to be high level and versatile to ensure it can be adjusted to align easily with new partnership opportunities at a National and Regional level.

While New Zealand's borders remain closed to global travel Central Otago will be operating in an environment where ALL regions are actively marketing to a much smaller domestic market. It will be essential that TCO's destination management and marketing gives consideration to this potential threat to our traditionally strong domestic destination. Partnerships will be a way of navigating the challenges this may raise.

## Regional:

TCO is in regular contact with the broader 45 South collective of eight Regional Tourism Organisations discussing ways of supporting each other's efforts for the greater regional good. There is potential that in future a 45 South campaign could be developed to target a larger market like Auckland, however it is too early to consider this fully yet.

Discussions have been held between Queenstown, Wanaka and Central Otago RTO's about working together to benefit from visitation accessing the region through airport gateways. Queenstown airport is expected to be the gateway into the lower south regions over the next 18 – 24 months therefore TCO has raised the idea of collaborating and supporting the airport and AirNZ in some form when the airline makes a return to moving tourists domestically.

## National:

The government has appointed Tourism New Zealand to develop a plan to kickstart domestic tourism. They are tasked with getting Kiwi's to participate in the tourism economy. It is too early yet to know what campaign opportunities there will be for regions, however RTO's will be a critical partner in any effective campaign.

## Membership Organisations / Consumer Events:

TCO will continue to engage with membership organisations as appropriate to visitor persona's and campaign plans. These will likely initially include: New Zealand Motor Caravan Assn. (NZMCA) and AA Tourism.

Consumer Events are unlikely to be an option in the short term, however as travel restrictions ease for New Zealanders TCO will identify and give consideration to event attendance based on location, audience and interest sectors.





Prepared by: **Tourism Central Otago**



visit us at [centralotagonz.com](https://www.centralotagonz.com)



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