

Queensland: a world leader in fitness tourism



Summary of Research

Strategic Facts was commissioned by Tourism and Events Queensland to conduct research into what motivates endurance-sport athletes and what they think of endurance events held in Queensland.

In early 2017, an online survey was developed collaboratively with Tourism and Events Queensland, and distributed by endurance sport organisers to their participant databases. Almost 4,000 people participated in the survey. Below are the key findings from the survey.

These findings were subsequently presented to endurance sport organisers, who unanimously endorsed the results.

Respondents' Profile

- 57% were male and 43% were female. 62% lived in Queensland and 38% lived interstate or overseas.
- The majority were aged 35-54 (58%) and were working professionals (professionals, managers or self-employed - 64%).
- 93% from interstate and overseas routinely travel outside of their home state/country to compete in endurance events.

- 94% travel up to four times a year outside of their home state or country to participate in endurance events.
- They travel in tribes - 87% travel with family and friends, and 58% said their friends/family also compete in endurance events with them.

Endurance Athlete Motivations

- Endurance athletes are motivated by the joy of endurance sport – they compete for the love of it (4% surveyed were pro athletes, the balance was age groupers).
- They may not be pro-athletes, but they train like them - 54% train more than 6 times a week.
- Winning is not the objective for endurance athletes. 81% said personal goals, health and sporting achievements were 'Hugely Important' while only 29% said competition/performance was the reason they participate.
- Only 18% saw the post-event celebrations as 'Hugely important'.

Why Endurance Athletes Choose Queensland

1. Climate

- 99% rated the impact of Queensland's climate/environment/nature on their event experience as meeting expectations, 'Impressive' or 'Standout, Best ever!'
- 68% indicated that it's Queensland's climate/environment/nature that gives the State it's edge over other destinations.
- 38% from interstate and overseas said Queensland's climate and environment are 'ideal' for race times and personal bests. This was felt most by those from South Asia (60%); North Asia (52%); Europe (52%) and the Americas (46%).
- 59% from overseas said Queensland's climate, sunshine, fresh air and warm water were 'absolutely' the driving reasons they travelled to endurance events in the state.
- In the open-ended questions Queensland's 'climate' was frequently mentioned as giving the state the edge over other global destinations. Many responses described the climate as "challenging" or "motivating". A high number of responses mentioned that they are able to train/compete year-round in Queensland, accrediting the warm water and mild winters.
- Many responses stated that Queensland's weather/climate is dependable and reliable and described the diverse terrain of event locations as adventurous.

2. Overall Experience/Atmosphere

- 99% rated the overall experience/atmosphere of Queensland's endurance events as 'Met Expectations', 'Impressive' or 'Standout! Best ever'.

3. World Class/Safe

- 83% from interstate and overseas (and 88% from New Zealand) rated endurance events in Queensland as 'Above Average' or 'Outstanding' in World Class.
- 85% from interstate and overseas also rated Queensland as 'Above Average' or 'Outstanding' in being Safe.
- 75% of North Americans and 74% from South Asia rated endurance events in Queensland very highly in the 'World Class/Safe' category when compared to other events they have competed in around the world.

4. Standard of Competition

- 99% commended Queensland's standard of competition, 71% said it was 'Impressive' or 'Standout! Best ever'.
- Athletes from South Asia particularly rated the standard of competition in Queensland as 'Impressive' or 'Standout! Best ever.'" (83%).

5. Opportunity to Compete in Bucket List Destinations and Holiday After the Event

- 97% gave a big thumbs up on opportunity to compete in bucket list destinations (GBR, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast etc.).
- 90% of all (and 91% of overseas and 89% interstate) rated Queensland's reefs, islands & beaches as 'Impressive' or 'Brilliant'.
- More than two thirds (69%) of interstate and overseas respondents took a holiday in Queensland after an event (61% of all surveyed).

6. Welcoming and Inclusive

- 88% rated mateship and camaraderie as a 'Somewhat Important' or 'Hugely Important' reason they compete in endurance events.
- 84% rated endurance events in Queensland very highly in being 'Welcoming & Inclusive'.

7. Quality Time with Family and Friends

- 73% of interstate and overseas athletes rated Queensland as an 'Impressive' or 'Standout! Best ever' destination for enjoying time with family and friends (68% of all surveyed).
- 77% of all endurance athletes also highly rated their post-event Queensland holiday as being 'Family friendly'.

Strategic Facts

Strategic Facts is an internationally recognised Queensland professional services firm that specialises in the analysis of tourism, events and projects. Over the last 20 years in the industry, Strategic Facts has worked with many of the world's most significant tourism agencies, events, peak sport organisations and governments.

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