

WHY PROMOTE A MUSEUM?

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"It will certainly get my support from now on."

"It offers pure nostalgia even down to punching the tickets."

These comments from two previous speakers indicate in the first instance, the feelings of a person who has found in his visit to the tram museum, something to enthuse over and share with others. In the second instance, it reveals a need for elderly people to relive, enjoy and share past. The tramway museum offers such an opportunity.

Why do I as a Tour Promoter take people to a museum?
..... particularly the AETM at St.Kilda?

1. I have a personal interest in St.Kilda.

Through this I began to realise the potential the museum and its exhibits had to offer, and like the previous speaker who pledged his support, I wanted to share my pleasure also. With a skilled eye the tour promoter sees aspects, features, activities etc. which would appeal to various groups. To ride on a tram, get behind the controls, learn a little of "how it goes" etc. etc. kindles that personal interest.

One can easily promote that which has great appeal to one personally.

- Invite your tour operators to your museum - Fire their enthusiasm. It takes only one enjoyable experience to encourage a repeat the opposite, unfortunately is also true.

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When your Coach Captains arrive, invite them for a cup of coffee! Show them something special i.e. the workshop/maintenance facilities. Invite them to bring their family out as your guests for a day. Remember - Coach Captains can make or break a successful tour. Make every visit an enjoyable experience.

2. Personnel

I promote a museum where the people care for my passengers, and obviously enjoy having them:

(a) Booking the Visit

The first phone enquiry receives a friendly, knowledgeable response. All details are noted in an efficient business-like manner. The nature of the visit i.e. nostalgic, educational, general or specific is determined and the numbers ascertained. (The group locality may give opportunity for a particular tram or destination to be used. e.g. a Port Adelaide group would enjoy a ride on the Birney and a tour of the Trolley Bus shed.) Mention services which can be offered - Cuppa', luncheon, B.B.Q. etc. Such a warm result leads to a booking being made. Need I say how a booking may be lost?

(b) On Site

Smart appearance - members dealing with the public in uniform. Someone to greet the coach and captain at the gate - tell them how they are going to enjoy their visit. Outline the procedure - tell them of any gifts or encouragement awards offered during the visit. (A postcard of a tram they ride on costs 20 cents, but it means dollars to the museum when taken home and shown to friends with the appropriate story.) Give only three or four "prizes" to each group.

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Ensure that the guided tour is appropriate for the age group. It should not be a formal "parrot like" repetition for all groups. The guide should be approachable, friendly, knowledgeable and genuinely interested. Encourage feedback and sharing from the group.

The conductor can retain the attention of a captive audience on a tram by sharing a "tram" story. Encourage stories from the passengers. Little Billy loves to tell you that great grandfather drove horse trams. The elderly gentleman in the back seat loves to tell you that he rode this type of tram to school, and used to sit and watch the driver - take him into the motormans cab and let him relive his childhood.

When leaving. tell them how they have enjoyed their visit, and how you have enjoyed having them. Invite them back on normal operating days with their families/grandchildren.
- They'll come...

And so too you will be able to confidently expect a repeat charter from the coach company

The phone calls from enthusiastic satisfied passengers which feed back to the tour managers and promoters tell them that they were right in their assessment of your museum and you can be sure of more visits.

3. Displays

This is a very wide area to cover, and another section of this conference dealt with it, but as a tour promoter I look for a variation in presentation - certainly a balance between working and static displays. Opportunity to try, ride and touch as well as view. Information must be factual but not dull, and where possible related to

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experiences that the particular visitors can relate to. e.g. the cost of a tram ride in 1938 was 1d, now it's \$1.20 by bus. Children relate this to their pocket money now and what they would have received in 1938.

Displays and information should not only include the "this is how and when it was" aspect, but also the "why it had to be" and "why this was the most suitable" aspect.

Technical details are important and cater for a need, but a tourist is generally not particularly interested in the "facts and figures". Take the "expert" in your group aside to talk about this aspect.

Easy access to displays is important. Good lighting. readable printing, clear and simple cross referencing etc. were all covered during the visit to the Migration and Settlement Museum.

Little things mean alot, and when these seemingly little things are considered, then success follows. e.g. a little effort to assist the elderly board the "high step" tram car.

4. Other Attractions

Not only is the visit to the tram museum of great importance, but a variety of other attractive activities are often needed to complete the day.

What else is offering around your museum? At St.Kilda there is the mangrove boardwalk and the adventure playground - particularly for children, social clubs and picnic parties etc.

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If a theme can be followed for the days outing, promotion is made much easier. Perhaps if I outline the successful tour we do with Senior Citizens:

"A Day of Nostalgia"

- * Pick up at clubrooms, 9.15am.
- * Travel to Tramway Museum at St.Kilda.
 - Normal charter procedure (approx. 10.00 - 11.45)
 - Morning Tea
- * Travel through Angle Vale to Gawler.
 - Adelaide Plains Wine Growing district (30-45 mins)
- * Home style Roast Lunch
 - Bushmans Inn, Gawler (historic hotel with pictures of old Gawler etc.).
- * Tour of Gawler. (Gawler is 35-40 kilometres from Adelaide and has many historically classified buildings.)
- * Scenic Drive back to Adelaide via Adelaide Hills and Para Wirra Recreation Park.

What do you have in close proximity to your museum, which can be pointed out to your tour operators to supplement the visit to your museum?

Important: Promote your museum as the major attraction for the day - through a "Nostalgia" theme perhaps. Suggest other feature "fill-ins".

Summary

Why do I promote the St.Kilda Tramway Museum?

- * Because of its wide range of appeal.
- * Because it caters for the needs of many groups within the community.

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- * The personnel at St.Kilda:
 - Make my passengers feel welcome and important.
 - Enjoy telling them about and showing them the exhibits.
 - Convey a feeling of sincere warmth throughout the whole visit.
- * The feedback from passengers is always positive and encouraging.

I have successfully promoted the Tramway Museum to Senior Citizens and school groups. Tramway museums have, by their very nature a "saleable item", and when the members "sell" their product in the manner mentioned, then tour promoters will be only too anxious to visit.