



ISLANDS
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Media Release

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Best Job in the World heralds new era in tourism marketing

The phenomenal response to Tourism Queensland's Best Job in the World campaign has catapulted global tourism marketing into a whole new realm, CEO Anthony Hayes said today.

Mr Hayes said Tourism Queensland had known it had been onto a winning idea with its unique 'Island Caretaker' role offering a six month, \$AUD150,000 contract based on Hamilton Island exploring the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef, but in its wildest dreams had not anticipated that more than 34,000 people would submit video applications for the job.

"No one has ever done anything like this before and we have been simultaneously amazed, delighted and challenged by the response," Mr Hayes said.

"In many ways it has taken on a life of its own spawning special discussion groups, bulletin boards, blogs and websites with applicants critiquing their competition, having detailed discussions and swapping ideas and tips.

"Conducting a global online campaign that has relied almost solely on public relations and social networking has been a major learning experience for us, and while it has been hugely successful, there have also been a few challenges along the way."

Mr Hayes said during the first weekend of the campaign for example more than 200,000 people from around the world logged onto the www.islandreefjob.com website, including 25,000 in one hour alone.

"This placed a huge amount of strain on our server capacity and we had to increase it tenfold virtually overnight," he said.

"As the closing date for applications drew nearer we anticipated a further huge spike in traffic to the website and a couple of weeks before closing began advising people not to leave their submission until the last minute.

"We received and processed more than 7500 applications during the final 48 hours.





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"This massive amount of traffic understandably slowed the site down and regretfully some people weren't able to get their video application in on time."

Mr Hayes said Tourism Queensland initially looked at closing applications off at 30,000, not really envisaging it would actually reach that number.

"We hit that figure on Saturday evening with around 36 hours still to go until closing time and after some discussions, decided to waive the cap and keep the application process open until the cut-off time to give as many people as possible the opportunity to apply," he said.

"But when the clock finally ticked over to closing time we had to close it off.

"We pulled out all stops and trained extra staff to help process the 34,684 applications we received."

Mr Hayes said the processing and assessment phase was extremely strict to ensure that every applicant had a fair and equal chance and was measured by the same content management system.

"With such a huge number of applications to process in such a short time frame, we needed to be rigorous to ensure every application was assessed in the same way, using the same measures," he said.

"Unfortunately we have had some very disappointed applicants who went to a lot of effort but had their applications knocked back because they went over the 60 second limit according to our content management system.

"We encouraged them to re-submit an edited version – and many did – however there were some who missed out because they could not get back onto the site before the cut-off time.

"It has been frankly heart-breaking because people have gone to so much trouble and we have lost some fantastic applications but to be fair to everyone we have to be consistent."

Mr Hayes said Tourism Queensland had received hundreds of supportive emails and comments on blogs, websites and online forums.

The campaign's focus will now turn to short-listing for the top 50, which will be announced next Tuesday March 3 Queensland time on the www.islandreefjob.com website.





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The Top 50 will be narrowed down to a final 11, 10 of whom will be chosen by Tourism Queensland, and an 11th 'wild card' applicant chosen by popular vote.

These top 10 and the wild card candidate will fly to Hamilton Island in early May to take part in the final selection process with the successful candidate announced on May 6.

The successful applicant will then be working on July 1.

For further information on the selection process, including timelines, visit www.islandreefjob.com.

