Yolngu Tourism Masterplan
Arnhem Land
2014–2032

Masterplan Summary
Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation
Yirrkala • Northern Territory • Australia
Chairman’s Introduction

My name is Timmy Djawa Murmunmurnga Burarrwanga and I am a man from the Gumatj Clan of North East Arnhem Land. Our family has been working in tourism for many years on our homeland at Bawaka. Tourism strengthens our culture, language, family connections and it makes us proud of who we are.

Our land is our life, our true connection to who we are. It is our library, our supermarket, our bush university. We want to share our knowledge and connection to the land with visitors to help Balanda understand how important this is for us.

In 2010 I took a big step and founded Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation to help Yolngu people right across Arnhem Land to create their own businesses. It needed to be an Aboriginal organisation based in Arnhem Land, which could relate to and help guide Yolngu people to create business on our country.

In 2012 we took the next big step by launching the Yolngu Tourism Masterplan. The Tourism Masterplan is a very important story: it is our journey to the future. It is a new way for Yolngu people that relies on the old ways. It has much information on how to create and build a new tourism economy.

It is a bit like a Lipa Lipa: a traditional canoe. Much care and thought goes into selecting the right tree to make the Lipa Lipa and when it is ready to sail, a big ceremony is held to send it safely on its way. The Tourism Masterplan Lipa Lipa is the same. The captain is always Yolngu: a leader who guides and steers the canoe through the magical waters of Arnhem Land, always picking the right direction to move forward.

The Lipa Lipa has a powerful crew, made up of Yolngu people working in harmony with Balanda people, sharing knowledge and stories and ways of doing business. Sometimes the waters will be calm and we will move forward at great speed. Sometimes the going will be rough and we may have to slow down, or change course a little. But we will always keep our eyes on the horizon and move in the right direction.

When we reach our destination we will have created something very powerful and important for Yolngu people and for all Australians: a new economy where visitors come from all over the world to learn about our culture; a future for our kids and for their kids. Our culture will be strong and our country will be strong.

With the help we are getting from government, business people and friends who all believe in our vision; with the strength of Yolngu people; and with our wish to share our world and our culture, we will reach our destination. This is why the Tourism Masterplan is so important for everyone.

This Masterplan is a source of great Mulwat or value to Yolngu people. Mulwat refers to layers and layers of information and knowledge that is held in the earth. The Masterplan as it grows and develops will also add layers and layers over the years.

Lirrwi is a bridge between Yolngu people and the rest of the world. We are very proud of the work we have done and very excited about the work still to be done. Please read the Masterplan and please come and visit us. There is no word in our language for ‘stranger’. We see everyone as people and our homes and hearts are open to those who share this spirit.

Timmy Djawa Burarrwanga
Chairman Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation
Arnhem Land is one of the last great undiscovered places in Australia and possibly the world. It lies to the east of Darwin in Australia’s Northern Territory, covers approximately 97,000 square kilometres, and has a population of just over 16,000, the vast majority of whom are Aboriginal.

The land

It is a vast, ancient land, richly endowed with a culture that is more than 40,000 years old. Arnhem Land is Aboriginal owned and visitors need to obtain a permit to travel within its borders. Ceremonies that date back thousands of years are still widely practiced. No other destination in Australia has such mystique.

Yet Arnhem Land also has a very contemporary face. Primary industries include mining, tourism, art and fishing. Well-managed tourism is growing and has significant potential as it allows people to remain connected to their country and culture, and can provide worthwhile employment and widespread economic and social benefit.

Arnhem Land is many things: islands and bays with stunning white sands and the bluest water; magnificent billabongs, river systems and eucalyptus forests cover the landscape. Whilst Balanda simply refer to two seasons, the ‘Wet’ from December to April and the ‘Dry’ from May to November, Yolngu recognise eight seasons.

Wildlife, while not nearly as iconic or extensive as in Africa, is nevertheless plentiful, with a large number of native animals including birdlife, crocodiles and wallabies. It is also a fishing paradise.

Yolngu and their culture

Arnhem Land is also home to the world’s oldest continuous living culture. The Yolngu people are at one with the land. It is their school, their library, their home. All knowledge comes from the land and is handed down from generation to generation.

The Yolngu people are talented in their endeavours, and many speak up to 15 dialects. They are highly creative and some of Australia’s best Indigenous art centers are located in Arnhem Land. Family names such as Marika, Yunupingu, Gamambir, Namirriu and Maymuru are known internationally and feature prominently in the collections of art galleries and museums as well as those held in private hands.

Many Arnhem Land performers are widely known, including actor David Gulpilil (The Canvas, The Tracker, Rabbit-proof Fence and Crocodile Dundee) and Djakapurra Munyarryn who was one of the founders of Bangarra Dance Company and a star of the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Gurrumul Yunupingu, who comes from Echidna Island has performed before Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, and has been described as having “the voice of an angel”. Yothu Yindi also came from North East Arnhem Land and the famous song ‘Treaty’ was written by the late Dr Yunupingu at Birany Birany, one of the homelands, which is starting a tourism venture.

The annual Garna Festival, attended by more than a thousand people attracts people from all walks of life and is held at the important site of Guilkula each August.

Arnhem Land is all this and so much more; it was where the land rights movement began in 1963, when Yolngu people sent both petitions to the Commonwealth Parliament seeking recognition of rights to their traditional lands on the Gove Peninsula. These are the first documents bridging Commonwealth law, as it stood, and the Indigenous laws of the land. One of the petitions now hangs in Parliament House in Canberra.

Baniyala (also known as Yilpara), located on Blue Mud Bay, is a community that was freed on by the Dutch ship Arnhem in the early 1600s. In 2008 it became the first Yolngu community to secure rights.

An Introduction to Arnhem Land - Yolngu Land

The Yolngu people of Arnhem Land have taken a bold decision to create a new economy across Arnhem Land through an ambitious and long-term plan. The aim is to develop low-impact, high-yield cultural tourism to create employment and economic prosperity and to assist Yolngu people to stay connected with their country and culture.

First steps

Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation is a not-for-profit corporation established through the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC). It was created in 2000, by Yolngu, for Yolngu, to develop tourism. Its initial focus was the North East Arnhem Land region.

However, in 2012 the board of Lirrwi decided to take a broader, more ambitious view of the potential and create what is now emerging as a new and exciting visitor destination across Arnhem Land. This visionary thinking led to the development of the Yolngu Tourism Masterplan, which was launched in June 2012.

The key objective is to create up to 50 sustainable new jobs in tourism across the Arnhem Land region.

The Masterplan covers seven key strategic areas: Building strong foundations; Partnerships for success; Community consultation; Homelands destination development; Tour development; Training and learning; Promoting Arnhem Land.

Each of these strategic areas has a powerful common denominator. They have all been developed the Yolngu way, with Yolngu thinking and Yolngu values at the front and centre of each strategy. This Yolngu leadership and approach is strengthened considerably by the support and guidance of a large number of non-Indigenous individuals and organisations, who have given freely of their time, their wisdom and their knowledge.

Arnhem Land unquestionably has the potential to deliver an exciting new dimension for Australian tourism in the next 10 to 20 years (and beyond) and has many natural and cultural values that will resonate with people searching for more meaningful travel experiences.

Australia is in some need of new tourism destinations and experiences that will generate international and domestic visitor interest and excitement, in the same way that the ‘Wet’ season did for Yolngu people. The same approach is being used here. Arnhem Land was created in 2010, by Yolngu, for Yolngu, to develop a visitor destination across Arnhem Land. This visionary approach is strengthened considerably by the support and guidance of a large number of non-Indigenous individuals and organisations, who have given freely of their time, their wisdom and their knowledge.

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1 Balanda: Balanda is a Yolngu word to describe non-Indigenous people. It is believed to be an old Mecassan word from Sulawesi (Indonesia), derived from the word Hollander.

2 Yolngu: The word Yolngu is a generic word for Aboriginal people in North East Arnhem Land.

Background to the Masterplan

The Masterplan strategic directions

The Masterplan covers seven key strategic areas:

- Building strong foundations
- Partnerships for success
- Community consultation
- Homelands destination development
- Tour development
- Training and learning
- Promoting Arnhem Land
Arnhem Land homelands
Homelands were created in East Arnhem Land in the early 1970s. Yolngu leaders and their extended families began moving away from the mission communities and the expanding mining town of Nhulunbuy, to return to their traditional clan lands around Arnhem Land. This was a Yolngu initiative to enable them to determine their own future, conduct their affairs according to Yolngu law and live and raise their children on their traditional land. Their vision was to develop sustainable, self-sufficient homelands for themselves, their families and future generations. That vision is still strong and relevant today. There are approximately 50 homelands in the east Arnhem region and many more throughout the whole of Arnhem Land.

Nhulunbuy
The town of Nhulunbuy is the largest centre in Arnhem Land. It was built to service a bauxite mine and refinery in the 1970s and has grown to a population of approximately 3000 and has many services and facilities. Gove Airport, 15 kilometres from Nhulunbuy, receives daily services from Cairns and Darwin from Air North.

Tourism assets
From a tourism industry and visitor perspectives the region also has some practical assets including:

• Air links: Arnhem Land is a geographically compact area, with airports at the eastern and western points (Darwin and Gove). There are currently 92,000 commercial airline seats available into Gove (Nhulunbuy) per year from the international airports of Darwin and Cairns. There is also a highly developed network of internal air services within Arnhem Land. Many remote communities have airstrips for light aircraft, which operate on a regular basis.

• Road systems: Roads are manageable by four-wheel drive only (the roads also form a natural barrier to mass tourism which is inappropriate to the region).

• The Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation: Based in Yirrkala, Lirrwi has been in operation since 2010 and has already played a major role in the development of Indigenous tourism. Arnhem Land definitely has great potential to develop as an exciting new destination for tourism, providing life-changing experiences for visitors; however, any tourism development must be led by and managed by Yolngu people, not impact negatively on the culture or the environment, be high-yield and low-impact, well-managed, sustainable and proceed at a pace determined by Yolngu.

Our Vision, Our Future

A better social and economic future for all Yolngu people through sharing our culture with visitors to our country: Arnhem Land – Yolngu Land.
Guiding Principles for Tourism

These Guiding Principles were developed by Yolngu people to provide a decision-making framework for the successful development of Arnhem Land as an exciting, rewarding new tourism destination. All existing and new tourism businesses will be required to subscribe to these Guiding Principles as a component of the Service Agreement with Lirrwi Tourism.

The country

- Arnhem Land has been the home of Yolngu people since the beginning of time, they have always been there, and this must be acknowledged and respected.
- Yolngu have a responsibility to care for country.
- Tourism should never control what happens on country.

Tourism business

- Yolngu must have the right to say who can and who cannot visit the country.
- Yolngu wish to share knowledge with people from other places.
- The marketing and promotion of Arnhem Land must embrace all these values.
- The tourism calendar must synchronise with the Yolngu calendar.
- Yolngu should partner with Balanda, but not depend on Balanda.
- Tourism must be flexible and fit in with Yolngu culture, not control it.
- Infrastructure must be not overdone and kept in harmony with the country.
- Finance is only an instrumental means for achieving success and will never be considered an end in themselves: maximising profit will never be the number one business objective.

People

- Recognition that Yolngu are ‘farmers and custodians’, not nomads.
- Visitors must recognise that Arnhem Land is a place to be slow and steady.
- Yolngu wish to be inclusive for all Australians.
- Tourism should be a positive influence on Yolngu to provide value.
- Tourism should be a source of pride for Yolngu.
- Yolngu will be open to mentoring.
- Tourism must recognise ‘Mulwatt’ — value.

Culture

- Yolngu will have the right to decide how much and what information to share.
- Surface information is enough for sharing.
- Ceremony takes precedence over tourism.
- External stakeholders must learn Yolngu culture and systems.

Respect

- The land and all it contains, needs to be recognised for its significance to Yolngu people.
- Sacred sites must be respected by everyone.
- History must be revised through tourism to recognise the Yolngu people as the first people of Arnhem Land.
- The environment will be respected at all times.
- The environment will be respected at all times.
- Respect is a key requirement for all visitors.

In preparing strategies for the Masterplan, consideration was given to a wide range of visitor data, demographic and psychographic information and other forms of market research to identify relevant information about visitor needs, interests and motivations.

While the Indigenous tourism sector is significant, comprising more than a million domestic and international overnight visitors in 2013, it is broad in its definition. Indigenous tourism visitors are defined by the types of cultural activities that they participate in while travelling in Australia. These include experiencing Aboriginal art, craft and cultural displays; attending an Aboriginal performance; or visiting an Aboriginal site or community. This may be as a one-off activity or as part of a range of other tourism activities.

While available research has delivered insights that the Yolngu have taken on board, much of the quantitative data is inconsistent and more qualitative insight is required — particularly for Arnhem Land — as this is a specialist tourism market and needs to be treated as such. Arnhem Land is a destination, not just an activity.

Key insights

Awareness and potential

Evidence suggests that in Australian domestic markets there is a decline in Indigenous visitation, not because potential visitors don’t want to engage in an Indigenous experience, but mainly because they don’t know that an Indigenous tourism experience exists. In international markets there is strong visitor interest, however, there seems to be a disconnect between interest and participation, again largely due to a lack of knowledge and awareness.

Differences between domestic and international Indigenous tourism visitors

Australians see Indigenous experiences very differently to our overseas visitors. The Australian view of an Indigenous experience is more passive, centred around reflection and learning. Overseas visitors are likely to see Indigenous experiences as offering adventure. Australians want to know more about Aboriginal culture.

There are opportunities in education

The Galaxy research also showed that there were extremely strong views, held by the majority of parents in all states, that children should have Indigenous cultural knowledge, this was particularly strong among parent respondents in Queensland (99 per cent), NSW (96 per cent) and Victoria (93 per cent). This indicates opportunities for Lirrwi in the educational market.

Domestic Indigenous tourism visitors tend to be older

In domestic markets, interest in Indigenous tourism experiences is highest among older life-stage segments aged between 45 and 64 years. Most travel as a couple, with other couples of friends and relatives without kids; 66 per cent are working either full or part time, while 18 per cent are retired. This suggests a large and receptive consumer segment.

International visitors interpret Indigenous experiences as cultural adventures

International visitors to the Northern Territory are predominantly younger experience-seekers aged 15–29 (39 per cent). Their primary motivation for travel is personal travel and they favour adventure and risk taking; however, older experience-seekers aged 45+ are more directed in their concepts of adventure towards immersion in unknown cultures. They desire destinations with contrasts, authenticity and opportunities for privilege. This may be luxury but it can also mean privileged access to unique and authentic experiences. They tend to travel alone or as couples and European countries are the strongest source markets.

Type of experience

Indigenous tourism is not seen as a stand-alone experience by Australians or international visitors — while this may be due to a lack of awareness of what is on offer, it could also suggest that perceptions of the Indigenous tourism experience may be enhanced or leveraged by other experiences such as those presented by the natural environment. There are indications that Australians are also particularly receptive to the benefits of Indigenous tourism as a way of strengthening local communities.

3 Source: Mapping Australia’s International and Domestic Visitor Markets Against Indigenous Tourism Operators; L Ruhanen University of Queensland; Whitford, C McLennan, Griffith University January 2013

4 Source: TRA International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey data YE June 2011 cited MyTravel Research

5 Source: Galaxy Omnibus March 2009, cited Indigenous Cultural Education, Tourism Northern Territory

6 Source: TRA, IVS and NVS (unpublished data) cited in MyTravel Research

7 Source: TRA, IVS and NVS (unpublished data) cited MyTravel Research, 2011
Target Markets and Visitor Segments

The most appropriate way in which visitors can engage with Arnhem Land is to travel as part of an escorted group. This is due to the cultural requirements, remoteness, internal infrastructure and wishes of the Yolngu people. Groups can include individuals who join scheduled group departures as well as groups who participate in a tour customised to their specific needs and interests.

Lirrwi is developing product and marketing strategies to reach four key consumer segments:

1. **Corporate**: defined as executives and employees of private sector, government and philanthropic organisations participating in cultural awareness and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs.
2. **Education**: school and university groups interested in cultural engagement and learning.
3. **Independent travellers**: aged 25-64 and interested in authentic cultural experiences and adventure.
4. **Special interest travellers**: defined by their interests in pursuits ranging from art to fishing and photography.

As a result Lirrwi decided to focus on these two important segments and delay the introduction of independent traveller group programs until the tour experience was more developed. These tours will be introduced on a gradual basis from 2014.

Each of the target segments selected require different approaches, both from a promotional and experiential perspective. An important part of positioning Arnhem Land and the Yolngu tourism experience is its cultural context and managing visitor expectations:

- **Expectations**: It needs to be understood that the ‘tourism experience’ in Arnhem Land is unique and falls well outside the normal mainstream tourism sector. Arnhem Land is a remote area and this alone creates a somewhat different experience to that usually encountered on an organised tour. Travellers should expect the unexpected.
- **Home**: In other societies ‘home’ is synonymous with a house and all that happens within it. In Arnhem Land ‘home’ has a different meaning: in the Yolngu world, the country and all that happens within it is regarded as home and therefore a different attitude is required.
- **Time**: A visit to Arnhem Land requires the visitor to adjust expectations from a normal holiday. Yolngu people have a different concept and understanding of time and place. There is a degree of spontaneity, and a relaxed informality, which sometimes results in changes to plans or itineraries at short notice.

Visitors to Arnhem Land who embrace and respect the cultural values of Yolngu people always have an enriching and in many cases, life-changing experience. In a sense, the target market is, more often than not, self-selecting; visitors have a strong interest in the culture and a willingness to embrace the different value system and step outside the comfort zone of everyday life.

The Way Forward - Our Strategic Directions

Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation has identified seven strategic directions in its Masterplan to ensure that Arnhem Land is fully able to realise its vision for creating a better social and economic future for all Yolngu people:

1. **Building strong foundations**
   Establish stable foundations for Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation through implementation of legal, risk management corporate governance human resources, business development and financial management frameworks.

2. **Partnerships for success**
   Create partnerships with 15 corporations and relevant government agencies, to provide a broad range of professional services and financial support to Lirrwi and the homelands, to assist destination infrastructure and business development.

3. **Community consultation**
   Ensure the Yolngu Community leads the style and pace of tourism development in their country, and decision-making follows a set of Guiding Principles developed through comprehensive consultation with the community.

4. **Homelands destination development**
   Work with homeland communities to identify tourism opportunities on individual homelands and create appropriate infrastructure to be able to cater to a variety of target visitor segments.

5. **Tour development**
   Develop a range of tours and visitor experiences to engage priority visitor segments including corporate groups, school tours and cultural tourism groups.

6. **Training and learning**
   Develop and implement a range of training and job preparation programs which will ensure a local skills base across a wide range of disciplines including: marketing, business management, touring and transportation, administration, financial management, hospitality and events.

7. **Promotion of Arnhem Land**
   Raise awareness, consideration and intent to travel to Arnhem Land through strategic marketing communication programs.
Strategic Direction 1: Building Strong Foundations

A priority for the Masterplan is to establish Lirrwi as the lead organisation for developing tourism in Arnhem Land. Lirrwi is a powerful Yolŋu word which means ‘charcoal’ (Ŋurrŋgitj). Lirrwi defines the layers of charcoal, which go deep into the earth and deep into the past. It is the place where Yolŋu people always return to, in life and beyond life. A single piece of charcoal cannot burn brightly on its own. It takes many pieces. So too with the people and the culture. In the Yolŋu world everything is connected, the country, the people, the plants and the animals, even the sky and the world above.

Lirrwi exists to create a new visitor economy for Arnhem Land through the development and positioning of homeland destinations to national and international visitor markets. The aim is to create sustainable economic foundations that will enable more Yolŋu people to remain on country and live the more traditional lifestyle associated with better social, cultural and health outcomes.

Lirrwi... how the organisation evolved

Lirrwi Tourism evolved out of a pilot program called the East Arnhem Tourism Hub, which was established in 2007 by Tourism NT with Commonwealth funding from the former Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). It soon became apparent to the Yolŋu people that the scope and capacity of the original hub was too limited to properly develop cultural tourism businesses. There was inadequate resource, staffing and strategic capability. Most importantly the Yolŋu felt that they were not in control of their own destiny in tourism development.

A decision was taken by Chairman Djawa Burarrwanga to restructure the operation and create a new organisation, led by Yolŋu people. This was an historic decision and in 2010 Lirrwi Yolŋu Tourism Aboriginal Tourism Corporation was formed as a not-for-profit Aboriginal Corporation. It was established through the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) with an all Yolŋu board. DEEWR and the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) immediately came on board with financial support. Matt Grooby was appointed manager in May 2011.

The Yolŋu Tourism Masterplan, launched in June 2012 has been a defining aspect of Lirrwi Tourism and has attracted a wide range of highly skilled partners and supporters who bring talent, experience, skill and capital to the organisation.

Lirrwi attained nationally recognised tourism accreditation (ATAP) in 2012. This was an important milestone and meant Lirrwi was accepted into the Indigenous Tourism Champions Program (ITCP). This program is run collaboratively by Tourism Australia and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) in conjunction with the state and territory tourism organisations. It provides accredited Aboriginal tourism product with wide ranging marketing and trade development opportunities and assists them to build a reputation for reliability and consistent quality in service delivery.

Addressing market failure

As a not-for-profit Aboriginal corporation Lirrwi puts all income into tourism development and is well placed to address the significant ‘market failure’ that exists in the region (with appropriate levels of support). Although Arnhem Land holds considerable potential for tourism there are also significant barriers that would deter purely commercial tourism operations.

The concept of ‘market failure’ is particularly relevant to tourism destinations. The globally recognised and utilised practice to address this situation, is for governments to step in to take on a developmental role, which no private sector organisation could or would do.

Some good examples of how this applies in the Australian tourism market are the federal, state and local government tourism bodies. Their role is to undertake broad based destination, product and event development; assist tourism operators in developing their businesses; help expand market distribution and coordinate destination marketing and promotion. While they all have a responsibility to work with the private sector, they all have to be funded by governments, because without that funding, there would be market failure.

This principle applies equally to Lirrwi. The organisation has taken on the role of developing Arnhem Land as a tourism destination. There is no other organisation that has the capability to undertake the roles of branding, promotion, product and destination development; assisting homeland business become viable through training and mentoring; and advising on everything from accreditation to financial and risk management.

The vision and scope of the Tourism Masterplan together with Lirrwi’s innovative structure and sound business model makes a compelling case for support from various funding agencies, corporate partners and other philanthropic organisations.
Lirrwi business model

Lirrwi’s starting point for creating a new business model to develop Arnhem Land as a tourism destination was to undertake extensive consultation with Yolngu communities to establish the Guiding Principles for Tourism. Other considerations pointed to the need for structuring its operations in such a way that it could address key factors affecting tourism in Arnhem Land.

- The capability of Lirrwi Tourism to secure funding and provide support advice and training to homelands across a broad range of business disciplines including business establishment and risk management.
- The capability of Lirrwi to develop relationships with government and to secure and work with partners, mentors and the travel industry.
- The capacity for Lirrwi to develop a united and coordinated brand for Arnhem Land, which could not be done by any single operator.
- The need for a single point of reference for government, promotional bodies, partners and the travel industry.
- The need for strong, consistent and visionary leadership that the communities could confidently support.
- The need to have a well managed controlled approach to tourism development.
- The need for homelands to move into tourism gradually and focus initially on delivering the core experience rather than worrying about marketing, transport, food service, accommodation etc.
- The need for flexibility in case of unexpected disruptions such as Sorry Business.

As the ‘child’ gains experience and knowledge, they become more independent, and will undertake financial management and other important training, establish market gardens, prepare meals for visitors, develop accommodation and even provide transport. The growth of the business will be similar to the growth of a young person: seeking independence, making mistakes and a continual process of learning and testing boundaries; all the time the ‘child’ knows that the ‘mother’ Lirrwi is there for advice, back up and support.

The bond between the homelands and Lirrwi will be permanent, and operate initially under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and as more experience is gained, a Service Agreement will be developed with each homeland. This will cover standards, training, commissions, accreditation and all aspects of running a successful business. Lirrwi will always be responsible for marketing, bookings and relationships with mentors, partners and government organisations. In return for providing these services Lirrwi takes a commission from each tour, which varies between 20 and 40 per cent. A higher commission is necessary in the initial stages because of the greater responsibility and workload undertaken by Lirrwi. This will reduce over time as each homeland becomes more independent.

There is also an opportunity (and a necessity) for Lirrwi to develop its own tours to help maintain financial viability and cater for special interest markets such as art tours, festivals, walking tours etc. The single disadvantage of this model is that it places a short-term financial liability on Lirrwi.

The model that accommodated all the above considerations is uncomplicated and effective. It is based on the concept of ‘Yothu Yindi’, or ‘mother and child’. Lirrwi is the ‘mother’ and the homelands are the ‘children’. In the initial stages Lirrwi provides the customers, looks after bookings, transport to the homeland, camping facilities, food, financial assistance, payment; the people from the homeland focus on delivering a unique experience.
**Lirrwi organisational structure**

Lirrwi is governed by an executive board comprising Yolngu business, cultural and community leaders. It is supported by a special advisor on the development and implementation of the Masterplan and an advisory panel of eminent Australians.

**The Lirrwi Board**

- **Djwam (Timmy) Bunyawanga - Chairman** Djwam is managing director of Bawaka Cultural Experiences and was a member of the Expert Panel for Constitutional Reform as well as being a board member for a range of local Aboriginal organisations.
- **Dhangel Caruwarl** Dhangel is a director of Riiripang Yidaki, a business focused on Yidaki (didgeridoo) and also lectures in the Charles Darwin University Yolngu Studies Program. She is a translator for the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and works with NT Corrections for prisoner visitation.
- **Daryl Lacey** Daryl is a senior Dhimirr Ranger who is a board member of the National Resource Management Board (NT). He is a recipient of an Environmental Management award from the National Aboriginals and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC).
- **Baruywa Mununggurr** Baruywa Mununggurr is a widely respected and popular Yolngu elder of the Djapu clan. In addition to being a Lirrwi board member, Baruywa is also chairman of Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation.
- **Mangalay (Peter) Yungupingu** Mangalay is a senior Gumatj Clan leader from Birany Homeland.
- **Dhalulu Ganambah-Stubbles** Dhalulu has a highly accomplished and widely respected Yolngu educator and current principal of Yirrkala School. She is also connected to Bawaka Homeland.
- **Lulpangi (Kevin) Mununggurr** Lulpangi has represented Bukudal Homeland and the Masterplan in a number of forums and is strongly engaged in Lirrwi activities.

**Masterplan advisor**

- **John Morse AM** A former managing director of Tourism Australia and is chair of Tourism NT and Tourism NSW and is chair of Sydney Attractions Ltd (owner of Sydney Aquarium).
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- **Mangalay (Peter) Yungupingu** Mangalay is a senior Gumatj Clan leader from Birany Homeland.
- **Dhalulu Ganambah-Stubbles** Dhalulu has a highly accomplished and widely respected Yolngu educator and current principal of Yirrkala School. She is also connected to Bawaka Homeland.
- **Lulpangi (Kevin) Mununggurr** Lulpangi has represented Bukudal Homeland and the Masterplan in a number of forums and is strongly engaged in Lirrwi activities.

**Advisory Panel**

- **Geoff Dixon** Geoff is chairman of Tourism Australia and chairman of the Garvan Medical Research Foundation. He sits on the boards of publicly listed Australian companies Crown Limited and Adslot Ltd. and is an Ambassador for the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.
- **Professor Andrea Hull AO** Andrea is deputy chair of the National Museum of Australia, and has a consultancy specialising in advisory work in cultural and educational settings.
- **Jane Maddon** Jane is head of investment for the Australian Trade Commission. Prior to assuming this role in early 2013, she headed the Tourism Division in the former Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) and was a member of its executive board from 2008-2012.
- **Djambawarawilli AM** Djambawarawilli is best known as one of the country’s most celebrated Indigenous artists. He is also a prominent Yolngu elder of the Djapu clan. In addition to being a Lirrwi client, Djambawarawilli is also a member of the National Museum of Australia's Executive Board.
- **Bill Wright** Bill is a respected tourism industry leader and chairman of ID Events Australia, a company he established over 40 years ago. He has served on industry boards including Tourism Australia, Tourism NT, Tourism NSW and is chair of Sydney Attractions Ltd (owner of Sydney Aquarium).

**Lirrwi business plan**

Prior to commencing commercial operations in 2010 Lirrwi put in place a four-year business plan, which detailed its marketing, financial and operational goals for growing tourism operations to Arnhem Land.

- **Continual economic growth in Australia and globally**
- **Brand development and growing destination awareness**
- **Sustainability of Lirrwi Tourism**
- **Current trend extrapolation**
- **Continuous product and homeland capacity development**
- **Continued air access**

**Future visitor and revenue targets 2014–2018**

The table below is a result of an analysis of the region and the operator’s carrying capacity and is based on the following assumptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Number of Groups</th>
<th>Number of Visitors</th>
<th>Visitor nights</th>
<th>Gross Tourism Revenue</th>
<th>Communities Involved in Tours</th>
<th>Yoilngu paid participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>$680,000</td>
<td>(15 expected) Bawaka, Bagetti, Nymumku, Baluduk, Bariyala, Binriyana, Birrikirri, Gacawiyi, Ganumbirri, Dhambala, Gurrnalal, Garman, Gan, Garumuru, Wulkyri Beach, Wulkyric, Yirrkala</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015–2016</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–2017</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017–2018</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes*

- Figures only relate to land and air based tours and do not include cruise ships. Cruise market figures large numbers and no overnight stops which distorts the real picture. While cruising is a growing and important high yield market it does not create overnight accommodation and length of stay is short usually one day only.
- The number of school groups for 2014-2015 has doubled from the previous year. In 2013-2014 Lirrwi hosted four private school groups averaging 15 pax over five days. In 2014-2015 Lirrwi has bookings for eight groups averaging 15 pax over five days.
- Lirrwi expects private school groups to increase to around 12 in 2015–2016 and eventually reach a maximum sustainable number of 20 school groups per year.

**Strategic Direction 1**

- Significant increase in Lirrwi’s operational capacity (passenger seats and guides) will allow Lirrwi to service more customers and generate more revenue.
- Paul Yunguping participation refers to Yolngu people who have received some form of payment in relation to Lirrwi organised tourism activity.
- Overwhelming majority of tour activity occurs between April and September.
- Introduction of significant new product expected to increase activity and revenue considerably.
- Destination awareness set to increase considerably through a range of marketing activities including branding, online and Tourism Australia/ Tourism NT activities.
- Corporate sponsorship is expected to grow in line with improved product and increased exposure.
Lirrwi governance and risk management

From its inception the development of a risk management strategy was high on the list of priorities for Lirrwi. Ethics Matters Pty Ltd (risk management consultants) has partnered with Lirrwi to provide pro-bono assistance for a period of three years to guide and support in all aspects of risk management. Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers, have partnered with Lirrwi to provide pro-bono advice on legal and contract matters.

The philosophy underpinning the strategy is that Lirrwi be lead by Yolngu people and that Yolngu law is embedded within the approach to corporate governance and risk management.

Risk management framework

Methodology

Lirrwi is aligning its approach to risk governance, assessment and management with the internationally recognised COSO (www.coso.org). The approach is one that builds robustness and sustainability into risk management by being embraced throughout the organisation and can deal with the scope and complexity of the current and future business activities. This methodology covers all aspects of risk management including:

• Risk Governance
• Risk Assessment
• Risk Policies
  • Internal Controls
  • Risk Monitoring
  • Risk Reporting

Implementation

Lirrwi is adopting a phased approach to the development of the risk management framework that is consistent with the business model and strategy. Phase One will establish the risk governance, identification and management processes. Phase Two will build greater sophistication into the risk management process by enhancing risk assessment methodologies.

Governance and risk management in Lirrwi

The governance framework for Lirrwi consists of the board of directors and senior management. Additional guidance and support in relation to risk management is provided by Lirrwi’s business partners, Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers and Ethics Matters. As a member of an ORIC corporation, all Lirrwi directors and managers must ensure that they remain up to date with the corporate governance requirements. Lirrwi will keep a register of training and will ensure that they remain up to date with the corporate governance requirements. Lirrwi will keep a register of training and will facilitate further corporate governance training as required.

Policy development

In keeping with Lirrwi’s strong focus on good governance, a range of policies, procedures and plans are being developed. The organisations involved in policy development and implementation are the Lirrwi Board, Ethics Matters, Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers, Perks Integrated Business Services and Commonwealth Bank Secondees.

The following policies are under development and will be presented to the board progressively over 2014–2015:

• Financial Management
• Governance policy relating to board meetings and director responsibility
• Intellectual property, brand management and Lirrwi identity protection
• Bookings and cancellations policy

A compliance register is also being developed for Lirrwi to ensure that all policies, procedures and plans are reviewed and updated regularly and that key corporate dates are recorded with mechanisms in place to ensure any date specific tasks are actioned appropriately.

Legal matters

Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers have been a partner in the Yolngu Tourism Masterplan since its commencement and provide a wide range of legal advice in many areas including name registrations, booking terms, indemnity forms, homeland leases, employment contracts, and intellectual property etc.

Asset register

The Lirrwi manager has compiled a detailed asset register with secondee assistance from Jawun Indigenous Corporate Partnerships. The asset register identifies all Lirrwi assets and will be constantly updated and improved over time in line with Lirrwi’s growth.

We place great value on the contribution by our partners and supporters and now have a group of dedicated, professional people who believe passionately in the Yolngu people, our culture, Lirrwi and the Masterplan. All our partnerships are based on mutual respect, mutual responsibility and two-way learning. This is the right way.

Strategic Direction 2: Partnerships for Success
Lirrwi Partnership Program

The development of partnerships with government, the private sector and many other organisations has been fundamentally important to the progress of the Masterplan.

When the Masterplan was conceived, Lirrwi turned to corporate Australia to secure the specialist services, support and funding it needed. Its strategy was to develop a partnership framework and secure key corporate supporters covering financial support across a wide range of business disciplines.

Under the Lirrwi Partnership Program a ‘partner’ is defined as an organisation that has committed to contributing a minimum of $150,000 over a three-year period in funding, or the provision of services. To date, Lirrwi’s Partnership Program has contributed in excess of $2.77 million in financial services support. In addition Lirrwi has attracted a second tier of support from smaller organisations and individuals that don’t necessarily have the resources of the bigger companies, but who also wish to make a contribution. They are defined under the Lirrwi Partnership Program as supporters and many are expected to convert to full partnership contributions in the future.

Partners in the Masterplan

Australian Government Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) provided significant support through a Strategic Tourism Investment Grant (STIG) under TQaul grants for Indigenous Tourism Development. This enabled Lirrwi to launch the Masterplan with confidence.

Adventure Junky is a Sydney based adventure marketing agency providing assistance to Lirrwi in the areas of branding, online development, social media and newsletters.

Amalgamated Holdings Ltd (AHL) is one of Australia’s leading hospitality, entertainment and leisure companies. They own Rydges Hotels and Resorts and are a Masterplan Partner through the provision of funding and room nights at Rydges and QT properties.

Commonwealth Bank of Australia has provided Lirrwi with three to four corporate group visits per year since 2011. Both the former and current CEOs have taken a personal interest in Lirrwi and lent their support to helping develop other corporate relationships.

Ethics Matters is a company run by Robyn Neasmith who is one of Australia’s leading risk management specialists. Ethics Matters is providing Lirrwi with a broad ranging risk management strategy.

Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers provide Lirrwi with an ongoing range of pro-bono legal advice in relation to service agreements, employment contracts, tour waivers, land tenure leases, intellectual property and other legal issues.

Jawun Indigenous Corporate Partnerships works with Lirrwi by seconding highly skilled business consultants and corporate executives to work through priority programs such as financial management, business plan development for homeland businesses, feasibility studies for tourism infrastructure developments and various mentoring activities with Lirrwi staff.

MG Media is a public relations company specialising in travel and tourism organisations and provides Lirrwi with a range of PR services.

MI Carnegie & Co is a major finance organisation that supports many social enterprises such as Lirrwi. They fund a number of school and university visits each year to East Arnhem Land through Lirrwi and also offer low interest social loans.

Northern Territory Government through various departments and agencies has provided operational funding to Lirrwi for equipment, accreditation advisory services and assistance for website development.

Qantas Airways provides flights for Masterplan related travel which has been critical to Lirrwi’s ability to secure partners and attend meetings and conferences across Australia. Qantas will also assist with promotion of Arnhem Land through their various communications channels.

Rio Tinto provides funding towards Yolngu staff costs and regional travel expenses to engage with communities and homelands.

Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation is part of the Bunuwal Group, which is based in Yirrkala. The Rirratjingu Clan are major beneficiaries of Gove Agreement Mining Royalties. RAC has always been highly supportive of Lirrwi, but have recently reinforced that relationship by becoming Masterplan Partners via funding contributions over three years.

Tourism Australia (TA) provides support to Lirrwi and the Masterplan Partnership Program, through a range of activities including specialised Indigenous tourism research, sponsorship of visiting media, photography and social media marketing. TA has included Lirrwi in its Indigenous Tourism Champions Program following accreditation approval.

Tourism Australia is highly engaged with the Tourism Masterplan as they see it as an exciting new destination for Australia with significant potential interest from international markets. The level of support from TA will increase significantly once Lirrwi moves into consumer tours (2nd half of 2014).

National supporters and collaborators

Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) has provided operational funding over three years to Lirrwi, which has been instrumental in assisting the establishment of the organisation.

Avana Group is a national tourism training organisation and is working with Lirrwi on an Arnhem Land specific tourism training strategy and is also helping Lirrwi investigate the feasibility of establishing a tourism academy.

Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre is situated in Yirrkala and is one of the best Aboriginal art centres in Australia and is a pivotal component of most of Lirrwi’s tours. Buku has an impressive historical collection, which gives visitors great understanding and insight to Yolngu history and culture. Lirrwi and Buku enjoy a cooperative and productive working relationship, which has included involvement in the graphic development of the Lirrwi identity and the aesthetics of the Homeland Infrastructure Plan. Tourism and art are inextricably linked as art has always been and will continue to be the visual depiction of the Yolngu culture.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) DEEWR provided salary funding for two positions through the Indigenous Employment Program to assist with the establishment of Lirrwi. This funding finished June 30, 2013.

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) provides Lirrwi with significant and varied support through the Indigenous Tourism Champion’s Program as well as vehicle leasing. Other supportive roles will be investigated in the future including areas such as business plan development.

Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and Lirrwi are currently engaged in building a corporate partnership; ILC has expressed interest in assisting the Masterplan in the future, possibly in the area of homeland infrastructure.

Jawun Indigenous Corporate Partnerships is a national tourism training organisation and is providing intensive two tours mentoring to Lirrwi. Mick Jerram, owner-operator of NT Immersions is a member of Jawun and his key areas of expertise are remote risk management and tourism logistics. This mentoring is being part funded through Indigenous Business Australia and STIG. Mentoring will be also focused on remote catering and be provided by leading Sydney chef Sean Curley from Fratelli Fresh who will be developing menus, cooking training and advising on procurement.
Yolngu Tourism Masterplan

Strategic Direction 3: Community Consultation

Community Consultation and the Masterplan

Community consultation is vital to the success of the Masterplan. It has implications for every strategic initiative ranging from early business development in homeland communities through to international marketing and promotion. It will progress the pace of tourism involvement by the Yolngu and will remain an essential component to ensuring that tourism remains a sustainable industry in Arnhem Land.

Objectives

Lirrwi’s long-term consultation strategy is to engage communities in two-way dialogue and continuous feedback aimed at achieving three key objectives:

1. Creating long term commitment and involvement in tourism in homeland communities.
2. Ensuring that the pace and style of tourism business and infrastructure development is culturally appropriate and consistent with the wishes and needs of the Yolngu people.
3. Collectively addressing and resolving key learning, training, business and infrastructure issues, as and when they arise and ensuring that the tourism experience is of a consistently high standard.

Considerations

There are a number of considerations, which influence Lirrwi’s approach to community consultation:

Access

- The vast distances and often difficult road conditions impact on travel time and ability to reach homelands.
- Homelands have limited communications technology - apart from telephone landlines - Internet connection is very low.

Experience and expectations

- The lack of experience in tourism in homeland communities often requires a ‘back to basics’ type of approach starting with a beginner’s introduction to tourism.
- There is a need to maintain a realistic view and manage expectations. Tourism will take time to develop and is not relevant for all homelands.

Ongoing engagement and follow up

- Personal visits to homelands and communities from Lirrwi staff are highly important from both a cultural and operational perspective.
- Follow up consultation on an ongoing basis is essential, as homelands move through all the stages of decision making to get a business up and running.

Homelands consultative approach

In implementing the community consultation strategy Lirrwi will undertake a phased approach with each homeland community, aimed at first building engagement and support for tourism. As community engagement builds the next phase is expected to be more focused on issues associated with establishing businesses, infrastructure, training and employment; the third phase of community consultation will address factors associated with sustainability such as quality control, product development, expansion and market responsiveness.

Homelands consultative phases

Tourism business is a new way for many homeland communities. To be successful, and achieve our vision, we need to do a lot of talking around the campfire, under a tree or even on the beach. Community cooperation and communication are really important.
Our mission is to create 50 sustainable new enterprises in the next 15-20 years. These will provide high quality, low impact tourism experiences to the world. This is ambitious – but with our determination and support from government and the business sector, we will achieve great things for Yolngu people.
Lirrwi has engaged the services of a Melbourne-based architect, Hannah Robertson who has been tasked with the development of an overall design plan for each homeland. Hannah is passionate about socially driven architecture and has worked in communities in Mexico, Papua New Guinea and Cape York.

Hannah has visited homelands in Arnhem Land to hold consultation meetings with traditional owners, assess current infrastructure and create an initial design plan for each homeland. Draft architectural proposals have been developed for three homelands. Bukudal has been included in this summary as an example.

**Draft architectural example – Bukudal**

**Bukudal**

Bukudal Homeland is located on Trial Bay approximately 160km from Nhulunbuy. It is the homeland of the Mununggurr family representing the Djapu Clan. The family, headed by Barayuwa Mununggurr have a long-held ambition to create a tourism business on their homeland. They have a particular interest in hosting school groups and Lirrwi has helped them find this market and develop appropriate experiences. Bukudal has now hosted eight educational visits including some from Australia’s leading private schools and is expected to host significantly more into the future.

Bukudal will be a pivotal homeland in relation to school groups and will serve as a base from which groups can visit a number of other homelands in the area. It will also be a regular fixture in the Yolngu Dhukarr Adventures in Culture (Multi Homeland) tours being launched for the consumer market.

Tourism has been an extremely positive factor in the lives of the people at Bukudal. They obtain great pride and pleasure out of dealing with school groups and sharing their culture and the family looks forward to hosting the tours. Lirrwi has worked with the family in regards to training, product development, marketing as well as infrastructure development.

Bukudal will be one of the first homelands to develop purpose-built visitor infrastructure and it will be one of the lead homelands in Land Tenure negotiations with the Northern Land Council and funding applications for infrastructure development.

**Stage 1**

**Fire pit area**

A fire pit area will provide a much needed ceremonial place for dances and music to be performed at Bukudal, it will also provide overflow seating during meal times. A seating area to be constructed in a clearing under shady trees. The form of the seating area is inspired by Yolngu string objects that depict different animals. The seating area faces a central fire pit and looks to the east where the Morning Star originated from.

**Estimated Budget: $10,000**

**Stage 2**

**Combined guesthouse and communal facilities building**

School groups have been identified as the greatest potential market for tourism at Bukudal and Traditional Owners are happy to continue to support visitation from such groups. As such, school groups can be accommodated in rooms immediately adjacent to one another for ease of supervision. It is envisaged that each room could accommodate four people in double bunk arrangements and in the event of group tours, couples could also be accommodated in double configurations.

The proposed site for development has been identified by the Traditional Owners so as to respect sensitive adjacent ground and minimise impact of interrupting views to and breezes from the sea. This means that the communal facilities functions of bathroom, kitchen, living and dining are proposed to be built as part of the one building.

Given the scale of this proposal it is possible to stage construction of the overall building, with the construction of the amenity facilities of highest priority as the first stage (stage 2.01) and the guest rooms to follow (stage 2.02).

- **Stage 2.01: $500,000**
- **Stage 2.02: $300,000**

**Total Estimated Budget: $800,000**

**Stage 3**

**Landscaping**

Landscaping along the extent of the tourism site is needed to create an erosion buffer and enhance the appearance of Bukudal.

**Total Estimated Budget: $10,000**

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**Communal amenity building**

Scale 1:200 at A4

**KEY**

- 01 – Verandah
- 02 – Combined Living and Dinning Space
- 03 – Store Room
- 04 – Kitchen
- 05 – Women’s bathroom
- 06 – Men’s bathroom
- 07 – Guest room*
- 08 – Men’s Activity Place
- 09 – Women’s Activity Place
- S – Bench Seat

* Each guest room to sleep either two people in double configuration or four people in bunk configuration
Strategic Direction 5: Tour Development

Tour Experiences

Touring experiences are at the heart of Lirrwi’s commercial business activity and will determine the success of Lirrwi and the homelands tourism involvement. Lirrwi’s product development strategies are geared towards developing genuine, compelling and sustainable cultural tour experiences.

To achieve this goal Lirrwi will address a range of product development issues associated with planning, operations, distribution and building demand:

Planning
- Working with each homeland to assist them to develop distinctive and sustainable cultural tourism experiences that are consistent with the Yolngu Guiding Principles for Tourism.
- Assisting the homelands to shape their tourism experience by providing insights into the needs and preferences of each target visitor market.

Operations
- Providing quality operational support for the tours – including tour planning, administration, transport, accommodation and catering.
- Maintaining quality control and ensuring continuous improvement in the range and quality of tour experiences through provision of consumer and industry feedback.
- Managing tour costs and trade and consumer pricing in such a way as to ensure margins are protected and Lirrwi tours are perceived as appropriately priced and offering value for money.

Distribution and demand
- Building visitor demand by engaging selected travel distribution channels including travel wholesalers and travel agents, corporate travel planners and decision makers, school networks and online consumer channels.

Product development approach

Adherence to the Guiding Principles for Tourism

Lirrwi approaches tour development using the Guiding Principles for Tourism in Arnhem Land, which play a pivotal role in encouraging community support and confidence and helping to define the style of product experience. Discussions are initiated and led by Lirrwi’s cultural advisor who works with each homeland to assist them in developing their own visitor experience.

Matching tours to target markets

Lirrwi maintains a ‘balanced portfolio of business’ based on three key target markets: corporate government and academic institutions, school groups and in the future, independent group tours. This approach is essential in meeting Yolngu needs and to provide a ‘safety net’ in case one market takes a downturn.

Lirrwi develops its tour range to specifically meet the needs of each of these markets. In the case of Corporate Cultural Awareness tours, time is a critical factor. Most groups visit over a weekend to minimise the time away from work. Only the most experienced and well-equipped homelands closest to Nhulunbuy are ideally suited to corporate groups.

School groups typically have longer time frames (4-5 days), are usually larger groups and have greater flexibility. Most prefer to visit at least two separate homelands and many are looking for some sort of service project so that they add value to the homelands they visit. Many school groups visit during term time whilst others come during their school holidays. All visits occur between May and October and most have lead times of 4-6 months.

Group tour development for independent travellers

Lirrwi’s new range of tours for independent group travellers will be launched to consumers through the website and other social media channels in 2014 with regular departures from 2015 onwards. At times the communities need to engage in unexpected and important cultural and ceremonial commitments, which often render homelands and/or key people unavailable and affect scheduled tour departures.

In developing its independent tours Lirrwi has had to build in the necessary flexibility. From 2014 the Yolngu Dhukarr Multi-Homeland Tour will be a regular set departure available for individual clients. It is a seven-day, six-night experience, visiting three different homelands.

People who come to Arnhem Land with an open mind and a willingness to respect and learn about our culture always go away feeling different to when they arrive. Many of our guests call it a life-changing experience. To step outside the comfort zone of everyday life can bring great rewards. This is what makes a visit to Arnhem land so special.
Independent group tours
In addition to the Yolngu Dhukarr Multi-Homeland Tour Lirrwi is also developing a number of new tours aimed at high yield markets including:

- **Women’s Experiences (Gay’Wu or Dilly Bag)** that appeal to both corporate customers and independent travellers and are extended tours of 5-7 days.
- **Expeditionary Cruise Ships and Air Touring groups**. These are generally focused on key communities of Yirrkala and Galiwinku and have been occurring since 2011.
- **Art Tours** involving the art centres of major Arnhem Land communities and using local air charter operators for transportation. These tours target collectors of Aboriginal art and allow them to purchase art at the source.
- **Sport fishing tours** involving both contemporary and traditional fishing techniques, delivered on homelands by Yolngu guides.
- **Yidaki (didjeridu) master classes**.
- **Day tours** for visitors to Nhulunbuy and Bawaka.

**Trialing, testing and training**
Lirrwi undertakes significant testing of tours and receives development support through the Indigenous Tourism Champions Program jointly run by Indigenous Business Australia and Tourism Australia. Through this program, Lirrwi has been funded for a highly experienced tour operations mentor from Savannah Guides.

The Lirrwi business model
Lirrwi as tour operator provides the end-to-end logistics for the customer from booking administration through to transport, catering, accommodation and risk management. The homelands are responsible for delivering the cultural experience to the visitor. This is evidence of the Yothu Yindi (mother and child) model in action.

**Tour pricing**
Tourism in Arnhem Land is inherently expensive due to the high cost of operating in a remote area and the quality of the cultural experience involved. Nevertheless, Lirrwi is implementing innovative measures to keep prices realistic and within consumer expectations. These measures include maintaining strict overhead cost controls and using low cost marketing strategies, particularly online. Also Lirrwi is developing alternate, tourism related revenue streams to ensure consistent cash flow and liquidity during the off-season.

Accommodation on tours
Until the introduction of permanent accommodation on homelands, visitors are being well provided for using high quality tents and comfortable bedding. Customers only need to bring their basic travel items such as clothing and toiletries. Lirrwi provides everything else. The longer-term plan is to design and build appropriate small scale, low impact visitor facilities in key homelands.

Catering for visitors
Lirrwi is also taking an innovative approach to tour catering. Food is an integral part of most travel experience and those paying for a unique Aboriginal experience have an expectation of being able to taste and possibly even catch or gather traditional foods. Lirrwi has partnered with leading Sydney restaurateur Fratelli Fresh to develop quality menus that incorporate bush foods to visitors. Fratelli will also be training Lirrwi staff on the cooking and presentation of food. In the longer term it is anticipated that homelands will be able to develop community gardens to provide fresh vegetables and herbs.

Transport
Lirrwi’s land-based tour experiences are for small groups of between 4-24 pax and are mainly focused on the homeland experience. Homelands are remote and accessible only by gravel roads or rough tracks. This means that transport is a critical factor. Lirrwi is well equipped with safe, highly capable and custom fitted four-wheel drive vehicles and appropriately trained and certified Yolngu drivers.

Product distribution
The main distribution channels for Lirrwi’s tours will be direct connection with customers through online, sales calls, presentations, referrals and repeat customers. In time Lirrwi will develop relationships with selected traditional travel trade distribution channels.

Customer satisfaction
Customer satisfaction is directly linked to the quality of the experience and is the best form of marketing through word of mouth or “word of mouse” via social media. Lirrwi seeks feedback from its customers directly, but is also implementing a social media strategy to encourage customers to provide feedback via channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Trip Advisor and Pinterest.

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**Strategic Direction 6: Training and Learning**
We have had 40,000 years of training and learning which help us to look after our visitors, but we also understand that we have to learn many new things. Training and learning about what our visitors need, how to handle emergencies, driving, cooking and other things will make us more successful and give our visitors a better experience. We also need to learn about running businesses and financial management.
Training Considerations

The Masterplan training and learning strategies are in the early stages of development and present challenges due to the scale and complexity of the requirement. Lirrwi has had to proceed carefully to ensure that its strategies can encompass its own corporate requirements, as well as the multi-faceted skills required by homeland workforces that are for the most part new to the tourism and hospitality industries.

In 2012, Lirrwi commenced development of a comprehensive training strategy for Lirrwi staff and Yolngu homelands involved in tourism, by appointing a registered training organisation, The Avana Group, to prepare a feasibility study.

Practical insight was also provided by the consumer trial tour conducted in June 2013, which identified significant areas for training development including tour guide training, general tourism and service training for the homelands as well as specific skills requirements.

The feasibility study and trial tour revealed that a one-size-fits-all approach is impractical and a customised, multi-layered approach is required. There are several key considerations, which determine this approach:

- Training will be an ongoing process as more homelands move into tourism. It is not time specific.
- Prior learning skills need to be recognised.
- Yolngu cultural values and systems encompass life long training in cultural knowledge, bush safety (risk management), sharing culture, law, communication and much more. Many of these skills have been developed and handed down over thousands of years and contribute greatly to the authenticity of the experience. Although these attributes are not formally recognised in any approved training programs, they are nevertheless critically important to the success of tourism in Arnhem Land.
- Yolngu training other Yolngu is also another dimension, which should be recognised and made an integral part of the training program. Yolngu visiting other homelands to participate in and learn from cultural experiences is an invaluable face-to-face training mechanism, which is inexpensive and provides great added value.
- Training and mentoring is already occurring, through partner organisations such as the Commonwealth Bank, Jawun, Savannah Guides and Fratelli Fresh restaurants. This training in financial management, tour guide and catering training for Lirrwi staff and other skills development needs to be embraced as a coherent part of the overall training strategy.
- The requirement to undertake accredited compliance training in areas such as driving, first aid, food handling, tour guiding and interpretation must also be a key priority.

Following receipt of the feasibility study Lirrwi has progressed to developing a customised strategy with the assistance of two organisations: Avana and Service Skills Australia (SSA).

Training approach

The training approach will be to customise a variety of formal and informal training programs to the specific needs of Lirrwi and the homeland communities. The components of the training and learning strategy comprise a workforce development plan, which follows a model created by SSA; scheduled compliance training, a mentoring program and informal training opportunities. Deployed in tandem with each other, these training options will best address the needs of Lirrwi and the homeland tourism communities.

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- Prior learning skills need to be recognised.
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- The requirement to undertake accredited compliance training in areas such as driving, first aid, food handling, tour guiding and interpretation must also be a key priority.

Following receipt of the feasibility study Lirrwi has progressed to developing a customised strategy with the assistance of two organisations: Avana and Service Skills Australia (SSA).

Training approach

The training approach will be to customise a variety of formal and informal training programs to the specific needs of Lirrwi and the homeland communities. The components of the training and learning strategy comprise a workforce development plan, which follows a model created by SSA; scheduled compliance training, a mentoring program and informal training opportunities. Deployed in tandem with each other, these training options will best address the needs of Lirrwi and the homeland tourism communities.

The feasibility study and trial tour revealed that a one-size-fits-all approach is impractical and a customised, multi-layered approach is required. There are several key considerations, which determine this approach:

- Training will be an ongoing process as more homelands move into tourism. It is not time specific.
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- The requirement to undertake accredited compliance training in areas such as driving, first aid, food handling, tour guiding and interpretation must also be a key priority.
Arnhem Land is a special place and we want the world to visit us to learn about our culture. We have been here for many thousands of years and our culture and country is still strong. We want to keep it that way and that is why the way Arnhem Land is promoted to the world is very important. We must be careful to attract only people who are very interested in our ways and want to learn from us as we want to learn from them.

Key objectives

The key objectives of Lirrwi’s promotional strategies are:

- To build a unique, memorable and appealing brand for Arnhem Land which reflects the values, the wishes and the Guiding Principles of Yolngu people.
- To create broad awareness of Arnhem Land as a desirable destination and the place to visit to have a unique adventure in culture.
- To create understanding in key visitor segments that Yolngu people wish to share their rich culture and welcome visitors to their homelands (there is no word for stranger in the Yolngu language).
- To develop cost effective, targeted promotional strategies, which reflect the brand and create conversion into high yield low impact business.
- To extend the current visitor season (May–September) by 1–2 months either side of the shoulder seasons.
- To position Lirrwi as the organisation to contact to arrange travel to Arnhem Land.

Building the brand

Central to all promotional activities is brand development. Lirrwi began work on this aspect of the project shortly after the Masterplan launch in 2011, assisted by brand agency and Lirrwi Partner, Adventure Junky. However most of the conceptualisation of the destination brand was undertaken collectively at the 2012 Mulwat Conference which brought together Lirrwi directors and partners, representatives from local communities, business and travel leaders from across Australia and more than 100 Yolngu from regional homelands. The starting point was consideration of the destination brand.

Strategic Direction 7: Arnhem Land Promotion

Arnhem Land Promotion

Arnhem Land, to most Australians is a mysterious, unknown destination and is seen as exotic, difficult to get to, and requiring an invitation to enter. This is fortunate in that there are few if any negatives to counter and in terms of appeal, it discourages mass tourism.

However it also means that much needs to be done to build awareness and understanding that Yolngu people wish to share their culture, by welcoming people to their homelands and providing experiences which can be found nowhere else.

To address this Lirrwi has embarked on a comprehensive and long term approach to building consumer and trade awareness of the destination, the homeland visitor experiences and its role as the region’s principal tourism organisation and tour operator.

1. Brand proposition

The strategy to promote Arnhem Land is directed to four key visitor segments:

- Corporate business executives
- School and university groups
- Independent travellers aged 25–64
- Special interest travellers

Marketing to these diverse segments requires quite different approaches - albeit under the umbrella of a strong consistent brand. While the promotional approaches may be different, the brand’s core proposition, which encapsulates the benefits of the experience, is common to all target markets:

"Visiting Arnhem Land and learning about the world’s oldest living culture is an extraordinary experience which is revealing, refreshing and for many, life changing."

2. Brand architecture

Arnhem Land, the Yolngu, Lirrwi and the homelands tour (product) experience each have their own brand characteristics and associations. The all have varying levels of awareness, and different points of connection in the minds of potential visitors.

Lirrwi - has limited awareness of name or meaning

Arnhem Land - refers to a geographic entity. It has low awareness but a broad Aboriginal connection

Yolngu - has low awareness but is associated with the cultural element of the tourism experience

The homelands (or products) have zero to low awareness, and are at various stages of development in terms of defining a unique visitor experiences

For the consumer and the tourism industry this represents a potential source of confusion. To clarify how Arnhem Land ‘brands’ fit together a structure needed to be developed that would make sense to the consumer. The ‘brand architecture’ plots each of the brands and their relationship to each other. For the average consumer the understanding needs to be:

- Arnhem Land is the territory or country
- The homelands represent the actual product experience
- Lirrwi is the tour operator
- Yolngu culture is the glue that holds it all together

3. Defining the brand essence

Lirrwi’s Arnhem Land visitor experience is difficult to categorise. There are many descriptors used in the travel and tourism industry that could potentially apply, such as ‘cultural tourism’, ‘eco-tourism’, ‘responsible travel’, ‘conscious travel’ and so on. However most of these are academic descriptions and none adequately captures the elements or the spirit of the experience.
The two principal defining elements of the Arnhem Land tourism experience are adventure and Yolngu culture. This distills into the core ‘brand essence’: ‘Arnhem Land – Yolngu Land Adventures in culture’

This is an accurate, relevant and unique summation of the Arnhem Land experience and beautiful in its simplicity. It will inform all communications and be tagged on all promotional material.

4. Brand identity
A key part of the overall branding process will be to develop brand identities (name, logos, visual elements) to represent the destination, each of the homelands and Lirrwi.

A priority was to develop Lirrwi’s corporate brand identity to ensure it presented a distinctive and professional image in the marketplace. Development of the identity involved many consultations with Yolngu people on homelands; meetings with the Lirrwi Board and management, artists, designers and importantly the Buku-Larrnggay Art Centre in Yirrkala.

Many initial concepts were drawn up, discussed and rejected. The thinking gradually evolved to depicting a campfire as the symbol for Lirrwi. This will have resonance with target markets, and Yolngu people and has great relevance and symbolism. It references Lirrwi’s literal meaning of ‘charcoal’ (see page 10) while also tapping into a range of other connected associations.

With significant help from Buku-Larrnggay Art Centre, several Yolngu artists were asked simply to paint their own Yolngu interpretation of a campfire. The final choice (below) was painted by Nonغربنعرى Marwili from Barndiyal (formerly Blue Mud Bay).

Other identities for the homelands and for Arnhem Land – Yolngu Land will be developed under the next phases of the Masterplan. All will share a similar look and feel and be clearly connected as a ‘family of brands’.

Promotional strategies
Engaging different target markets presents several major challenges for Lirrwi. These include the prohibitive cost of traditional marketing, the non-mainstream nature of the experience; high-yielding but hard to reach visitor segments that require a highly customised approach; and the growing influence and importance of social media. Two Lirrwi Partners, brand agency Adventure Junky and PR company MG Media, are assisting Lirrwi in formulating its marketing and promotional strategy. Lirrwi’s communication and promotional mix includes online promotion, public relations, partnership marketing, trade promotion and sales engagement with the education and corporate sectors.

Marketing and promotion
Social media
Advocacy and social media will play a key role in communicating the Lirrwi experience. It will be important to harness those that have visited the region to share their experiences with others, as they are the best advocates. All social media channels will be used extensively to promote Lirrwi and Arnhem Land, including Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram and Twitter. Links to other related tourism social media platforms such as Tourism NT and Tourism Australia will also be created.

Website
A new website for Lirrwi www.lirrwitourism.com is being developed by Adventure Junky and will be launched in mid-2014. The website has been kept simple and is a combination of motivational stories and photography/video and relevant information.

The content is relevant to all target markets and will be the primary source of information for people wanting to find out about a visit to Arnhem Land

Public Relations strategy
MG Media Communications has developed a PR strategy for Lirrwi, based on media relations activity and visiting media support. This will be used to engage a broad range of mainstream, business and niche media outlets.

The PR program is conducted under the direction of Yolngu homeland communities, Lirrwi Tourism and the Masterplan advisor, working closely with other partners including Adventure Junky. All activity will be mindful of the Guiding Principles for Tourism, established by participating communities. The PR strategy is relevant to all target markets.

PR objectives
• Establish Arnhem Land as an extraordinary and authentic Indigenous tourism experience.
• Introduce Lirrwi Tourism as the gateway to Indigenous tourism in Arnhem Land.
• Promote new tourism product, tours, experiences and businesses.
• Engage business audiences to promote cultural awareness programs and opportunities for corporate groups.
• Raise awareness of the Masterplan vision and its achievements.

Partner promotion
There are many opportunities for cooperative promotion. This strategy will be developed further when the independent group tours are launched and will be an important part of the promotional mix in the future.

• Channel Support: Lirrwi has had early discussions with partners such as Qantas and Amalgamated Hotels about promoting Lirrwi Tours through inflight magazines, cinemas, and other channels.
• International: Tourism Australia will support Lirrwi as an Indigenous Tourism Champion in promotional activities in Australia and Internationally.
• Australia Tourism Exchange (ATE): Consideration will be given towards attending ATE in the coming years.
• Tourism NT: The state tourism body has now recognised Arnhem Land as a tourism destination in its own right and Lirrwi and Tourism NT have commenced discussion on cooperative marketing.
• National Landscapes: Discussions have been held informally with the National Landscapes Committee and Tourism Australia about including Arnhem Land in the Timeless North national landscape, a joint program between Parks Australia and Tourism Australia.

Trade marketing
Trade marketing will be undertaken on a case by case basis, because of the unique nature of the product and the fact that a considerable portion of current business does not come through mainstream distribution channels. This is relative only to independent group tours and Lirrwi will be highly selective with whom they develop partnerships. Any trade supplier will be required to comply with the Guiding Principles, and be approved by the Yolngu people with whom they do business.

Education engagement
This market is heavily influenced by personal recommendation, word of mouth and personal contact. Social media and online is also highly relevant to this group particularly with students before and after their visit. The strategic approach is for one-off presentations to school principals and decision makers.

Corporate engagement
This market is a significant part of Lirrwi’s current business and will continue to be so into the near future. A Lirrwi cultural awareness tour is an ideal vehicle for any company that has a Reconciliation Action Plan and wants staff to experience Indigenous culture. While social media and online are important, this market is most responsive to personal recommendation and presentation. While Lirrwi already has an impressive list of corporate customers, there are many more opportunities in this space.
What Success Will Look Like

1. Arnhem Land is recognised internationally and within Australia as an exciting new travel destination, with strong brand recognition as the place to visit to have an adventure in culture, experiencing the wonders of the world’s oldest continuous living cultures.

2. By 2032 the annual visitor economy has grown to a level where it hosts more than 14,000 visitors, and generates more than $10 million in revenue. This figure is based on 10 per cent growth and 5 per cent increase in revenue per annum.

3. At least 75 per cent of this revenue stays in Arnhem Land for the benefit of Yolngu people.

4. Over 1,000 people are employed in 50 Yolngu businesses on homelands and in tourism related services such as transport and catering.

5. The tourism season to Arnhem Land is extended from its current 20 weeks to a 36 week season by 2032.

6. By 2032 the Yolngu have shared their culture with more than 100,000 non-Indigenous visitors from Australia and overseas, generating far greater understanding and respect for Aboriginal culture.

7. The environment is cared for and receives no negative impact from tourism development.

8. Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation is a well managed, self sustaining, respected organisation, operating to the highest standards of corporate governance and recognised as a global leader in Indigenous tourism development. By 2032 it aims to be turning over more than $10 million from its tourism activities.

9. By 2032 more than 1,000 Yolngu people are empowered and motivated through active participation in tourism and are able to develop business skills and knowledge throughout this process whilst keeping their culture and their country strong.

10. Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation is a 10 per cent growth and 5 per cent increase in revenue per annum.

Key Actions for 2014-2017

Strategy 1: Foundations

**Actions**

- Develop detailed financial planning models which include financial forecasting for operations, tours and market development, and cash flow management.
- Achieve operational financial stability by end 2017 through best practice financial management, increasing annual revenue to approximately $1 million through tours and other income streams.
- Seek government support to address market failure in relation to cost of destination development such as infrastructure, training and product development. This will be the key rationale for Lirrwi’s applications for major project funding towards Masterplan activities.
- Build further capacity in Lirrwi’s Board of Directors through targeted governance training and position Lirrwi as a benchmark for Aboriginal corporate governance.
- Instil a strong organisational culture in all Lirrwi staff through good leadership, ensuring everyone is engaged and motivated.
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate training and mentoring on an ongoing basis.
- Build staff resources to meet the demands of an increased operational demands and a growing organisation utilising the Workforce Development Plan.
- Ensure the Guiding Principles for Tourism are adopted and adhered to across all areas of Lirrwi activities.
- Implement risk management policies and procedures throughout the business.

Strategy 2: Partnerships

**Actions**

- Renegotiate existing Masterplan partnerships for a further three years to ensure Masterplan activities receive the same high quality level of support through to 2017.
- Secure two new Masterplan partnerships for financial support and investigate potential partnerships for business services relevant to the Masterplan.
- Develop a consistent program of partnership benefits including positive publicity, acknowledgement in all Lirrwi activities, cultural experiences etc.
- Build strong relationships with key Indigenous funding organisations (ILC, IBA and ABA) to support significant development activities.
- Achieve membership of Supply Nation to gain increased access to Australian businesses to further develop cultural awareness tours.

Strategy 3: Community consultation

**Actions**

- Schedule follow up visits to homelands and communities, build relationships with Yolngu and commence tourism development.
- Conduct ongoing and detailed consultation with relevant homelands re the Homeland Infrastructure Design Plan.
- Circulate Masterplan to a wide audience for feedback.

Strategy 4: Homelands

**Actions**

- Establish corporate structures, bank accounts and business plans for six participating homelands with assistance from Jawun secondees.
- Secure funding support from various organisations towards the Homeland Infrastructure Plan.
- Develop Memoranda of Understanding with participating homelands. More formal Service Agreements will be necessary once land tenure and infrastructure is in place.
- Obtain land tenure for six homelands through the Northern Land Council. Develop visitor infrastructure in six homelands.
- Create 100 regular seasonal jobs across eight homelands by 2017.

Strategy 5: Tour development

**Actions**

- Ensure Lirrwi is appropriately resourced with people and assets to deliver on tour commitments.
- Develop and implement robust systems around tour preparation, transport, camp management and catering.
- Work closely with homelands on experience development.
- Finalise and implement risk management policies applicable to tour operations.
- Elicit customer feedback via direct means (email questionnaire) and non direct (TripAdvisor/Facebook) and act upon feedback.
- Develop and launch independent group tours such as Yolngu Dhu kar Multi-Homeland Tour, women’s tours, art tours and fishing tours.
- Extend season from May to September (20 weeks) to April to November (32 weeks). This will be achievable within 3–5 years due to greater market awareness and the introduction of new infrastructure.

Strategy 6: Training

**Actions**

- Finalise training strategy and deliver appropriate training for all Lirrwi staff.
- Secure government support for training programs on an ongoing basis by linking training to creation on real jobs for Yolngu.
- Implement business development program for key Yolngu tourism business involving study tours to other more developed Indigenous destinations such as the Kimberley Region.
- Undertake training on homelands focusing on governance, financial literacy, interpretive skills for tour situations and developing a better understanding of the culture and behaviour of their visitors.

Strategy 7: Promotion

**Actions**

- Position Arnhem Land in Australia as the place to have an extraordinary Indigenous cultural experience through targeted effective promotional programs.
- Utilise the Tourism Masterplan as a powerful communication piece to secure government support and corporate clients.
- Implement annual targeted sales visits to key capital cities for corporate and educational group markets.
- Build the Arnhem Land and Lirrwi brand through online (website and social media) and third party means such as Indigenous Tourism Champions Program and partnership marketing activity with Tourism Australia and Tourism NT.
- Pursue PR opportunities with key travel/lifestyle media via state tourism organisations or directly through MG Media.
- Develop relationships with selected travel trade distribution partners including trial attendance at Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) and potential participation in Gday USA.
Achievements to Date

Since launching the Masterplan initiative in June 2012, Lirrwi has already achieved significant progress against each of its seven strategic priorities. While it is still early days, these achievements are impressive; they are indicative of the strong commitment of the Yolngu people and Lirrwi board and staff, partners and the many other organisations that have contributed to the Masterplan and the success of tourism in Arnhem Land.

Strategic Direction 1: Building strong foundations

• Formed an advisory panel of leading Australian business, academic, tourism, government and Yolngu leaders to advise on the development of the Masterplan.
• Secured the long-term services of John Mone AM, former CEO of Tourism Australia, to advise on the Masterplan.
• Lirrwi achieved accreditation as a tourism business through the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) in January 2013.
• Lirrwi achieved a significant increase in tour sales and revenue; growing from $30,000 in 2010 to $500,000 (projected) in 2014.
• Developed robust financial management systems and processes with Jawun secondees and other partners.
• Lirrwi recruited two new Yolngu staff - Attan Pearson as tour coordinator and Waka Mununggurr as a guide-cultural advisor.
• Lirrwi Masterplan Advisory Panel member, Djambawa Marawili, appointed to Prime Minister’s Indigenous Advisory Council.
• Commenced an ongoing comprehensive risk management strategy for Lirrwi through Masterplan partner, Ethics Matters.
• Engaged seven Jawun secondees who have worked on a number of projects, primarily in the business plan development and financial areas.

Strategic Direction 2: Partnerships for success

• Secured a $1.5 million Strategic Tourism Investment Grant (STIG) from the then Tourism Division, Department of Energy Resources and Tourism, in July 2012.
• Produced a video telling the story of the Masterplan and how important tourism is for Yolngu, to be used in key presentations to partners.
• Secured 13 Masterplan partners with a total contribution of cash and services valued at $1.95 million over three years, making a total of $2.77 million in cash and services.
• Created strong relationships with a wide range of politicians, senior government officials at federal and territory levels, tourism organisations, business, media, local organisations and other leaders to promote and provide support for the Masterplan.

Strategic Direction 3: Yolngu community consultation

• Delivered the Muluktat Conference in Nhulunbuy in November 2012, which was attended by more than 100 Yolngu people with an interest in tourism, as well as representatives from influential tourism organisations such as Tourism Australia and Tourism NT.
• Developed the Guiding Principles for Tourism in Arnhem Land through a workshop at the conference, as per the instructions of Lirrwi’s Yolngu membership.
• Identified the Yolngu value system with the Lirrwi Board, which are used to guide strategies along with the Guiding Principles.
• Undertook a road trip to five Aboriginal communities in North East Arnhem Land in September 2012 to discuss the opportunity in tourism and gain feedback.
• This has been followed up with regular ongoing visits to homelands to discuss tourism, collect feedback, undertake potential assessments and advise on the startup process.
• Contributed significantly to the East Arnhem Regional Economic Development Committee by providing tourism advice.
• Undertook significant planning activities relating to impacts of the Cove Refinery closure.
• Met with the then future Prime Minister, Tony Abbott at the Garma Festival in August 2013, and presented the Masterplan project to a wide audience of Yolngu, business, political and academic leaders.

Strategic Direction 4: Homelands destination development

• The number of Yolngu people Lirrwi has paid through its tourism activities since 2010 reached 100, which involved nine homelands and communities.
• Commenced work on the architectural Homelands Visitor Infrastructure Design Plan, which is a key component of the Masterplan.
• Lirrwi is working on Land Tenure for various homelands with the Northern Land Council and Masterplan legal partners, Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers.
• Established three ORIC corporations for homelands with another three underway. This will increase progressively as more homelands join with Lirrwi.
• Developed individual business plans for four homelands.

Strategic Direction 5: Tour development

• Lirrwi conducted around 30 tours in 2013 including five school groups and five corporate groups, four air touring groups plus numerous private bookings.
• Conducted successful trial of the Yolngu Dhukarr Multi-Homeland Tour (7-day, cultural expedition for independent travellers) in June 2013 and planning for consumer launch in July 2014.
• Commenced development of a Women’s Tour to be launched late 2014.
• Commenced early planning for other tours e.g. art tours, special interest.
• Received approval in principle from Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation to conduct day tours on Dhimurru Recreational Areas at Cape Arnhem and other areas close to Nhulunbuy.
• Developed new markets for cruise ships and air touring.
• Developed new visitor source markets and new products for educational tours. These included seven prominent private schools from NSW and Victoria as well as groups from the University of Melbourne.
• Obtained new four-wheel drive bus through grant funding from Northern Land Council.
• Established significant operational capacity through grants, loans and tour revenue to enable Lirrwi to mount major tours in remote areas.

Strategic Direction 6: Training and learning

• Commenced a tourism training strategy with Avana Group and Workforce Futures to address training needs of Lirrwi staff and homelands proponents.
• Met with non-executive chairman of the Fortescue Metals Group, Andrew Forrest as part of the Australian Government’s Indigenous Employment and Training Review in Darwin and in Yirrkala.
• Commenced intensive tour operations mentoring program with Savannah Guides Ltd through funding from Indigenous Business Australia.
• Secured the services of a leading Sydney chef from Fratelli Fresh to advise on menu development and training for Yolngu guides.

Strategic Direction 7: Promoting Arnhem Land

• Achieved significant national publicity on the Masterplan launch and follow up stories through partner, MG Media.
• Lirrwi was accepted into Tourism Australia/IAA Indigenous Tourism Champions Program (ITCP).
• Developed a new brand and website for Lirrwi with Masterplan partners, Adventure Junky.
• Developed a quarterly newsletter for Lirrwi that goes to a wide range of supporters and stakeholders through partner, MG Media.
• Participated in the Message Sticks Festival at the Sydney Opera House in March 2012 to promote Arnhem Land.
• Lirrwi has been instrumental in advising Tourism NT to treat East Arnhem Land as a destination in its own right. This has resulted in significant targeted marketing activities by Tourism NT for the region.
• Commenced development of PR Strategy through MG Media.
• Commenced development of social media strategy.
A considerable amount of intellectual property knowledge has been accumulated in the process of developing this Masterplan and is the exclusive property of Lirrwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation. It cannot be used or reproduced without prior written permission from Lirrwi. However, Lirrwi is willing to share information and learning with other Indigenous Corporations who wish to develop a regional tourism strategy.

Our Thanks

This Masterplan could not have happened without the direction and support of the Yolngu people who have a profound passion for creating a new future through tourism, on their country and on their terms. Lirrwi also appreciates and thanks the many businesses, individuals and government agencies that have been so generous in contributing their time, energy and financial support to help make the Tourism Masterplan become a reality.

From the chairman, board and staff of Lirrwi, thank-you all for sharing our vision.

Manymuk!