

**FILM FRIENDLY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**SCREEN
TOURISM**

screenwest

SCREEN TOURISM

Viewers are often motivated to visit the places where their favourite film or show was filmed. This phenomenon is known as screen tourism.

BENEFITS OF SCREEN TOURISM:

1. UNOFFICIAL MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Screen content is widely available to global audiences thanks to streaming platforms.

Films and series act as unofficial tourism adverts for a town/region. The exposure a film or series can provide is often hard (and expensive) to achieve through traditional marketing methods.

Productions filmed in Western Australia are already acting as powerful marketing tools, showcasing regions' natural beauty and attractions to local, national and global audiences. Examples include:

- At the Cannes Film Festival *The Surfer*, starring Nicolas Cage, shared Yallingup's stunning coastline to an audience of international screen industry professionals, journalists and festival goers.
- *Aussie Gold Hunters* Season 5 has shared the Goldfields-Esperance region with a UK audience of over 7.9 million.
- Series 1 & 2 *Mystery Road* has shared the Kimberley region with audiences in the UK, US, Canada, Germany and New Zealand.

Recommendation

During filming ask the production whether the director, producer or a key cast member is willing to film a testimonial or be interviewed about how well the location served the film's story. Perhaps the cast or crew can talk about how welcoming and accommodating the local community has been.

These quotes can be used in tourist information and can promote the region into the future.

2. INCREASED INTEREST AND VISITS

Screen content can and does draw tourists to a specific destination - think *Lord of the Rings* and New Zealand; *Harry Potter* and the UK, *Emily in Paris* and Paris and *Game of Thrones* and North Ireland. Positive effects aren't just isolated to the specific town or location where a production is filmed. Visitors are drawn to the whole region so nearby locations also reap the benefits as visitors often explore surrounding areas.

As an example, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* films are still attracting tourists to New Zealand almost 25 years after they were made. In 2023, 34% of international tourists to New Zealand visited a film location, film tour or experience during their stay[1].

Recommendation:

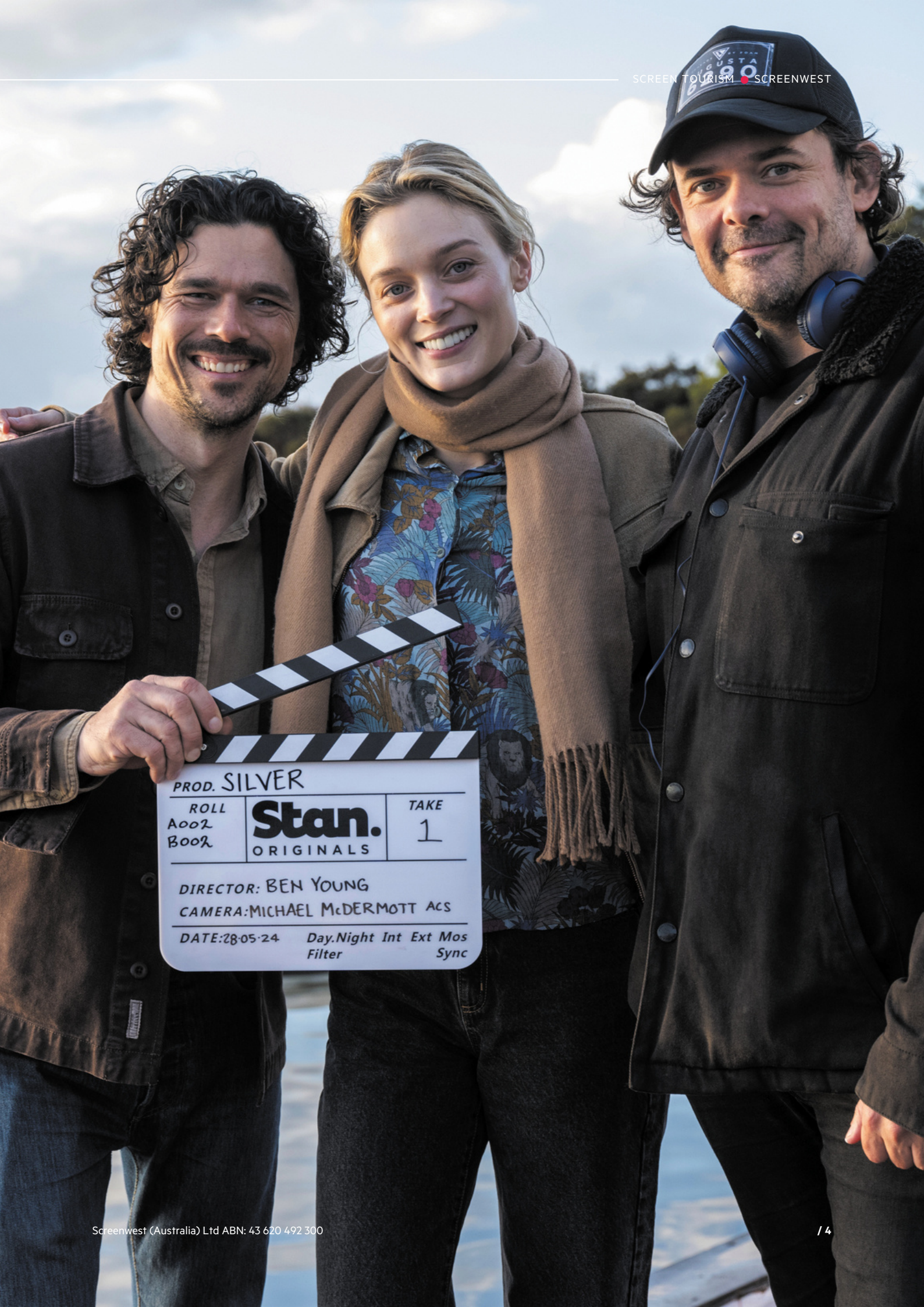
To make sure your region leverages the tourism opportunity think about what it can offer visitors and how to also highlight local areas not seen on screen e.g.

- location tours
- visitor experiences / exhibitions
- fan events
- roll out a local social media campaign alongside the film/series release.

Fans of locally shot films or series will be interested in seeing where the filming took place. To compare the real-life location with on-screen setting and to hopefully gain some insider knowledge about the production.

Think about the places the key cast and crew members visited? Where did they eat and stay while in the region - can this accommodation be offered to tourists? Were any nearby places/buildings used as locations?

[1] RACAVOLIS, K. 2024." 'ONGOING ADVERT': NEW ZEALAND TOURISM STILL DRAWS IN FILM FANS." THE AUSTRALIAN 25 FEBRUARY 2024. AVAILABLE AT WWW.THEAUSTRALIAN.COM.AU/BUSINESS/GROWTH-AGENDA/ONGOING-ADVERT-NEW-ZEALAND-TOURISM-STILL-DRAWS-IN-FILM-FANS/NEWS-STORY/F7584AFCF177DB7743E994BE550B3515



3. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Visitors are attracted to on-screen locations throughout the year, including off-peak season. Visits can be long-term as many films and series have an ongoing buzz and fan base years after their release.

Increased visitation from screen tourism can benefit a local economy by:

- Helping the location grow as a tourist destination.
- Boosting local businesses, e.g. local hotels, restaurants and shops etc. all benefit from an influx of visitors keen to stay in or near filming locations.
- Creating new business and employment opportunities e.g. guided tours, fan experiences and events etc.

Recommended action

Local buy-in and fostering a sense of community helps a location to reap the economic benefits of screen tourism.

- Encourage local businesses to work together e.g. accommodation providers should work with local tour operators to offer visitors tailored packages and experiences. Tour operators should work with local restaurants to offer inclusive trips.
- Provide visitors with great customer service, personalized experiences and good memories – this creates positive word of mouth marketing. Word of mouth marketing is a powerful form of advertising.
- Maximise the promotion of the region by creating ‘Instagram-able’ photo opportunities for visitors. Visitors will share these images on their social media, promoting the region to their friends and followers. For example:
 - Consider keeping mementos on display after the production has wrapped e.g. a see if a road sign or shop sign created for filming can be left up.
 - Create a map or photo board outlining filming locations.