A photograph of a triathlete in mid-air, jumping over a large, green and yellow inflatable obstacle. The background is a hazy, overcast sky. The text 'ATTITUDE IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ORDEAL OR AN ADVENTURE' is overlaid on the left side of the image in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

ATTITUDE
IS THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN
AN ORDEAL
OR AN ADVENTURE

BOB BITCHIN

APP.CO

ROYAL LIFESAVING EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE SUBMISSION

2018

ABSTRACT

Imagine starting something, that has never been done before. Suddenly you are a leader. Leading an industry that has never been in existence before.

Aquazone
WaterParks
PTY LTD



1. Describe how the nominee has provided a contribution to their community / industry in Customer Service

“To achieve consistently terrific customer service, you must hire wonderful people who believe in your company’s goals, habitually do better than the norm and who will LOVE their jobs.”– Richard Branson



Having traded a total of 2 Summer Seasons, the driving force of Aquazone at Lake Mulwala is to ‘provide the most unique aquatic adventure experience in the Border Region’. Passion for family aquatic adventure supports people of all ages and abilities, from as young as 5yr to the young at heart at 85yrs.

Our company values underpin the culture surrounding Customer Service:

- Integrity ‘get it right. Just do it Right’

Ensuring safety standards and daily practices reflect their intention.

- Passion ‘Love what we do and the adventure we offer’

Enable systems that are effective and cutting edge while our service standards reinforce and enhance the patron experience from initial enquiry through registration to completing their session.

- Innovation ‘grasp new ideas and change’

Empowering our Team to implement concepts and ideas that provide solutions to issues that impact our Customer, or Employees in the delivery of service.

- Fun “it’s what we do”

Embrace processes for activities that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

- Kiss, “Keep It Simply Safe”

Tracey Kellock reviewed [Aquazone at lakemulwala](#) — *5 star* [January 6](#) ·

From 1st contact by phone to ensure that my 13 year old young man (who happens to have autism and intellectual disability) would be welcome to our arrival check in and participation we could not fault the management and staff, Thank you for a fantastic, inclusive fun packed opportunity! The kids had a ball and we will be back!

[Lisa Turner](#) Reading your post gave me a wonderful and positive feeling as both my kids live with Autism and to read about your experience gives me so much more faith that my two will be ok! Thank you 😊. I'm excited and I've got two very excited kids! I'm looking forward to taking my two to enjoy an awesome facility 😊 [Manage](#) [Love](#) Show more reactions · [Reply](#) · 16w · Edited

THE SNOWBALL EFFECT:

From inception our intention has been to create a greater benefit;

- Promote the Aquatic Industry through outstanding practice and the ultimate “fun experience”
- Aligning with the local schools for Educational and Employment Opportunities
- Support local community groups / hiring venues for training reinforcing our local identity within the community. Provide fundraising donations and marketing of group.
- Parallel marketing of other business operators.
- Economic flow on.

The most significant contribution to the community /industry through our Customer Service is the economic flow on provided, and the sustainable employment retention for the future;

- Our team is equivalent to 20 fulltime positions for 6 months of the year.

Employment within our organisation provides skill development and future employment opportunities in:

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| • Customer Service | • Tourism | • Aquatics |
| • Sport/Recreation | • Team Leadership | • Management |
| • Marketing | • Incident Management | • Administration |
| • Education Support | • Risk Assessment | • Ideation, Innovation |

- **Economic flow-on and residual spend**

Whilst the exact amount is difficult to quantify, conservatively speaking we anticipate during the peak of trade Aquazone contributed near to \$250,000 plus per day in additional local spend.

For example:

Approximately 1000 patrons visited the park

4000 from outside of the area

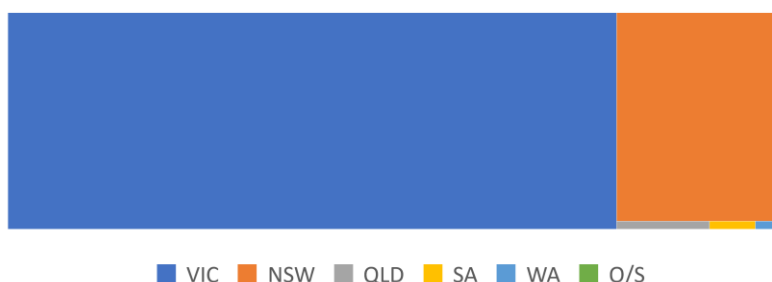
Bringing on average 4 people with them in terms of guests and observers.

1600 x \$135 (the average overnight spend per head Yarrawonga Tourism Figures)

= \$216,000 per day during the peak of our trade.

Many traders have commented on the additional spending they have acquired since the inception of our business in November 2016. Our postcode records suggest approximately 60% of our trade is from outside of the immediate area.

SNAPSHOT OF 16,500 POSTCODES



Yarrawonga Chronicle: Trade steady and strong by [FIONA BLICK](#) APRIL 26, 2017

Noel Wright quoted: Noel praised the newest tourism drawcard to the area Aquazone@ Lake Mulwala. "Aquazone has been a fantastic addition," he said.

"You couldn't get a car park along the foreshore and down Irvine Parade whereas last year the area along the lake was very quiet.

"This facility has been a real winner for the town."

- **Support for local events and local Charities**

Throughout the season Aquazone supported many local events, often utilising their wide social media reach for the support of local event organisations.

A significant local event is the Tennis Club's Easter Tournament, attracting players from all over the country. Aquazone was proud to donate \$100 worth of vouchers to be given away as door prizes. Other organisations that benefited were the local football club and the Dolphin Charity Football Game, with marketing support and door prize voucher donations of \$100 provided.

Aquazone, through donations and fundraising events, support local charities such as Turban Angels, Police Blue Light Disco, and a number of sporting groups for the benefit of the wider community.

- **Enhance civic pride in the lake foreshore area**

Support for the community wasn't always about what Aquazone could give rather, it is as much about what they represent and brought to enhance the community. Developing an attraction on Lake Mulwala brought new life to the lake foreshore.

Patsy McTaggart We have loved having you and your team here...

Please please come back later in the year...you add so much to our foreshore and town.....we will be so happy to see you again 😊😁😄😂😃😅😆😇 April 19

- **Schools and education**

Schools took advantage of the opportunity to engage students in a dynamic school excursion for sporting and social benefits. Galen College Wangaratta took the opportunity to support their Vocational Education and Training (VET) students through an alternative education opportunity. Students learned the process of a start-up company, daily practice, OH&S procedures and the opportunities open for employment and career within the aquatic industry. Local schools received a 10% discount in reciprocal support.

- **Public speaking and other opportunities**

Promoting and supporting the to public speaking and judging As a volunteer judge for the Business Awards, Deb was to industry and further support "by giving back".

Sponsoring the 'Life Intended' Melbourne was an investment development and promotion. Danelle Delgado, international business mentor and motivational speaker was the primary reason for Aquazone to become involved. In addition to the sponsorship fee of \$2500, Aquazone provided merchandise gift packs to 100 business owners from all over Australia which saw increased visitation and social media feedback after the event.



local region extended local business awards. 2017 Albury Wodonga promote the aquatic the local community

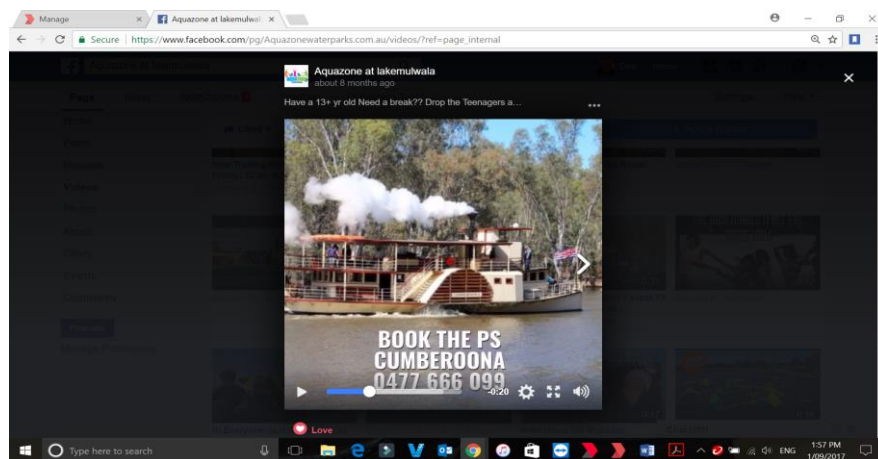
Business Summit in industry

As a key note speaker Deb, covered "Challenges of a Start-up Company". Resulting in bookings for 3 additional speaking events later in the year : Women in Business July 2017, Aim Breakfast Series August 2017, and Sun Country Tourism Meeting August 2017. Further supporting other organisations in addition to promotion of the industry within the region.

- **Product Packaging**

Throughout the season, Aquazone provided opportunity for other businesses to become involved through value added selling. Businesses could promote their product on site with brochures or vouchers, as giveaways in group packs, or as mentioned wrapping their product with the sale of a park ticket.

A great example is the Facebook Ad for parents to drop their 13+ yr old's at the park, while parents received a 10% discount to enjoy a meal and a cruise on one of the nearby Cruise boats.



At Aquazone, Customer Service is more than an once-off experience, more than a face to face interaction, it is everything we do on a daily basis to make a difference. Whether that be; our Patrons, their Families, our Team, our Supporters, our Stakeholders, our Community, our Region, our Industry.

A quote from a local - Kimberley Gray. "Well done Deb, I drive across that bridge a couple times a week for work and see many people totally enjoying themselves, I'm sure they will all be looking forward to it returning in Summer again." April 21 at 6:03pm



2 Describe (and provide evidence) of improvements and/or achievements made in Customer Service over the past 12-18 months



"Our team is vibrant and dynamic. Their individual pride and commitment shows how personally invested they are in the success of our operation. Their success is ours." Deb North AWBA June 2017 Victoria

Being a start-up company with a total of only 46 weeks of "seasonal" trading life under our belts, everything we do daily is with the intention to lever ourselves as industry leaders.

Leading by example from Business Planning to Social Media interaction. Our moto from concept to creation is "everything we do today is for tomorrow".

In 2017 on the conclusion of only 23 weeks of trade Aquazone @lakemulwala was awarded:

- **Moira Shire; Excellence in Tourism / Hospitality 2017**
- **Albury/Wodonga Business Awards: Finalist in Excellence in Hospitality and Tourism 2017**
- **RACV Victoria Tourism Awards: Finalist (4th in the State of Victoria) 2017**

Additional Recognition:

2018 Moira Shire - Queens Baton Relay: AZ Lifeguard Team supported Moira Shire on the water front of the foreshore during the prestigious Baton Relay. 2017

2017-2018 Mulwala Ski Club: AZ Lifeguards support the supervision of patron's during Club Mulwala's Ski shows. 2017 and 2018

2017 Wendy Lovell MP: Ms Lovell, thanked Aquazone @lakemulwala for our dedication and service to community.

2018 Victoria Police (Yarrawonga): Commending and nominating 2 Aquazone Lifeguards for Bravery after the successful rescue of a 19 yr. old gentleman who was at imminent risk of loss of life through drowning. The incident occurred outside of the Aquazone exclusion zone in a sheltered part of Lake Mulwala, during the Lifeguards shift. They were alerted via a bystander seeking assistance. The Female Lifeguards were aged 15 and 17 yrs. at the time of the rescue.

IMPROVEMENTS ON GOING:

Despite the recognition received our Team does not rest on their laurels. Everyday we seek to improve our practice standards and the services we provide.

Many patrons, of varying abilities enjoy the inflatable park. Some patron challenges presented to the Aquazone team to support were:

- Hearing impaired
- Vision impaired
- Limb loss
- Asthmatics
- Learning disorders
- Obesity
- Fear of open water (unable to see bottom)
- Anxiety disorder
- Epilepsy

This dynamic Team WITHOUT instruction, determined best practice outcomes by spontaneously creating and applying a system to support the patron and their enjoyment. Each patron was individualised regarding their support, attesting to the high standard of customer service.

Case Study 1

The following dialogue was a result of 2 Team members who supported a young woman who had weight issues. SO much so the young lady was going to deny herself the opportunity to enjoy the facility until Patrick one of our Team stepped in to support the lady on the park.

Sharna Graham reviewed [Aquazone at lakemulwala](#) — 4 star February 19 ·

Loved going too aquazone yesterday it was a bit challenging, but it worked. The staff were so welcoming and willing to help out of nowhere. Thank you for such a great day I am very impressed on how well the staff would help on the park and come back to check on people as well. Thank you for such an amazing experience am proud too say I slept like a rock was very tiring I really wanna Thank one of the staff members I am unsure of his name but thank you so much for kindly willing to help me through the course I am so appreciated of it. Thank you aqua zone 😊👍👍👍

Comments

Aquazone at lakemulwala Thank you so much for you kind feedback. Our team thoroughly enjoyed hanging out with you and your friends. We are so glad you had a great time. Pat and Brad were the gentleman assisting you. Sharna our guys love what they do, but they love you our patrons enjoying it more. We can't wait to host you again. 🙌🙌🙌 [Like](#) [Show more reactions](#) [Reply](#) ·



Sharna Graham Please say a thanks to them from me please so much appreciated 😊 · February 19 at 8:13pm

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES;

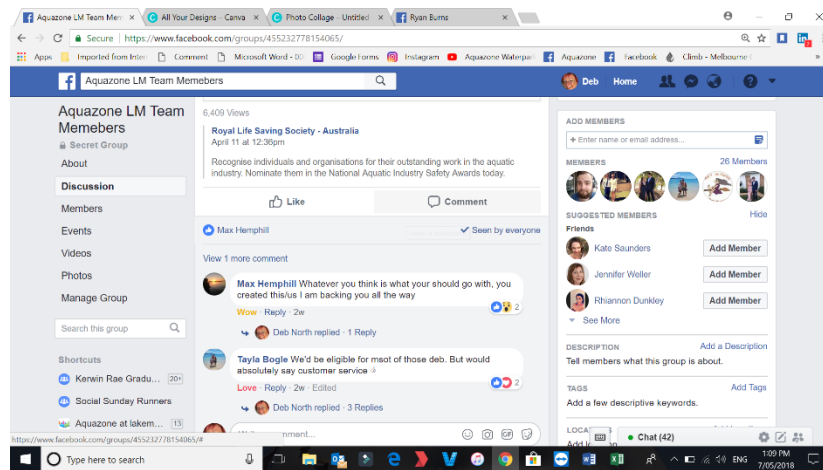
CHANGES WITHIN:

Constant refinement, and the improvement of our daily practices to support our Team to deliver outstanding service, investment in a blow-up boat with Trawling Motor to support the guys with maintenance, and rotations. This allows for the carrying of a generator and electric blowers to inflate the park when needed on a large scale.

Team Facebook Group Page, and Toolbox talks were implemented to improve communication and Team Professional Development. Technology has improved the ability to stay in touch and communicate a topic immediately to the team.

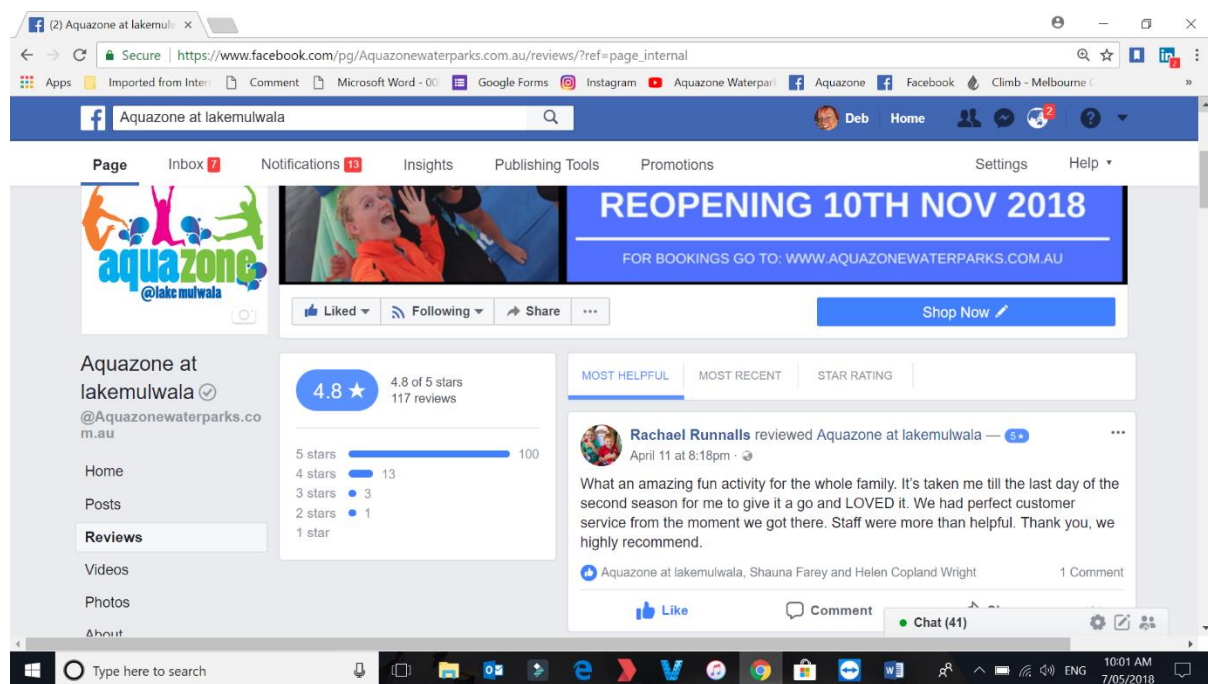
Senior Lifeguard Sean Jones designed and implemented a 2x weekly Fitness and Skill Training. Sean designed the training and skills setting specific to the needs of our business. By allowing Sean ownership, he unwittingly enhanced team comradery, and confidence to respond adequately within our unique facility.

Involving the Team in employee selection and mentoring: has seen the increased ownership, trust and respect among the Team. This reflects in their interaction with our customers.



A simple method of measurement is the reviews received:

Case Study 2:



ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

Season 2017/2018, we implemented a new booking system, the 3rd in 2 seasons!! The previous 2 were inefficient and cumbersome, the new product is outstanding and cost effective. Simplifying the customer processing time both on location or online.

The next most exciting change was the widening of Age Groups to utilise the Facility. Debating with Lloyds in London for near on 9 weeks, finally Children 5 and 6 years old can attend our facility with their families. In addition, 11-12-year olds attend our facility without the need for a Parent or Guardian. Previously the minimum age was 7+ and All children 12 and UNDER were required to have a guardian 16 yrs and above on the park with them.

Corporate Development is an addition to our organisation this year. Underwritten by Jennifer Weller, a business specialist and Telstra Business Woman of the Year Recipient. This program is to provide additional service to a wider demographic, through a quality 5 star program designed specifically for the needs of the business. This will be garnered after an assessment completed by Jennifer.



SCHOOLS VCAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:



In collaboration with Galen College Wangaratta, our VCAL Program was born in the Summer of 2017. Refinement of this program now ensure Students gain hands on experience in:

- Risk Assessment
- Customer Service
- Incident Response
- Incident Management
- Rescue Response
- Supervision in an Aquatic Facility
- Company procedures and protocols

With an emphasis on inland waterways, this program is being documented to be rolled out as a supporting educational experience to schools within the North East Region. The development of our VCAL program, now allows us to support local High Schools in the education of Aquatic Safety and Non-Traditional Facility Management, and alternative career pathways.

Aquazone @lakemulwala is a work in progress. A constant process of refinement and elimination by a team dedicated to being SIMPLY THE BEST they can be.



3 Describe how the nominee has shown commitment to aquatic safety through Customer Service



Aquazone @lakemulwala and the experience it offers is like nothing else within the region.

Patron EDUCATION and SAFETY is the Number 1 priority of the organisation, coming well above customer satisfaction.

OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS:

At the commencement of each season, our Risk Matrix is reconsidered to ensure the most important aspects of patron safety are considered and any changes required are implemented prior to operation:

- Supervision positions,
- Supervision challenges,
- Identifiable risk locations
- high traffic areas
- blind spots,
- rotation systems for Lifeguards,
- Inhouse Fitness and Skill Training (twice weekly)
- Compulsory Safety Briefing by all patrons
- suitable behaviours ie no flips of any nature anywhere on the park.
- Lifejacket fit and condition
- Equipment for Team
- Zero Tolerance Policy for Safety Breaches
- Terms and Conditions known and understood by all Team Members
- Marketing Solutions

Cont/.... 10

OUR PEOPLE:

Our young Team ranges in age from 14 years to Adult. They are intensively trained in customer service standards and provide cross role support.

Each employee is capable of stepping into any role whether ticket bookings, lifejacket fitting, or supervision.

ALL Team members hold a Lifesaving and 1st Aid Qualification:

- Inland Waterways
- Pool Lifeguard
- Bronze Medallion

In addition to industry qualification and professional skill development, ALL Team members attend an inhouse fitness and training program, twice per week during the season. Conducted from November to March each season to enhance their ability to be at the cutting edge of fitness and response.

This program was instigated by Senior Lifeguard Sean Jones. Due to the unique and potentially high risk activity, Sean created a program specific to the needs of our organisation.

This guarantees a well-rounded Team, who understand the intrinsic needs of all aspect of the business and the importance of their personal role with in it.

STAKEHOLDERS:

NSW Roads and Maritime, Moira Shire, and Goulburn Murray Water have recognised Aquazone @lakemulwala in terms of safety, and our commitment to raising the bar of Aquatic Safety in our Region:

“Deb approached Roads and Maritime with a professional and well organised proposal to set – up and operate an on-water business. Deb continuously liaised and demonstrated that the water-way was her platform and as such respected and promoted water-way safety and sustainability”.

Tim Peverell

Senior Boating Safety Officer
Boating Operations Branch | South
Roads and Maritime Services



“Aquazone is a new, unique and exciting adventure tourism operator to Moira Shire. During their first season Aquazone attracted a significant number of tourists to our region, particularly in the family market. Aquazone became an attraction in its own right and helped Moira Shire Council activate the Yarrawonga Foreshore. We have received positive feedback from the wider community that thought it was a fantastic attraction for the Sun Country on the Murray region.

Deb North and the Aquazone partners have showed professionalism and cooperation in their approach to Council and in their management of their business and the visitor experience.”

Louise Munk Klint
Moira Shire
Tourism Development Officer
Economic Development

“The introduction of Aquazone to Lake Mulwala was a bold initiative that attracted significant interest from the wider community. Lake Mulwala is renowned for its boating and fishing recreational values. This venture brought another demographic of the community that enjoyed the River Murray environment and generated significant

economic benefits to the region. The team at Aquazone are pleasant to work with, Goulburn Murray Water are proud that we can support recreational values at our Storages and we look forward to working with the team at Aquazone into the future."

Jay Whittaker

Goulburn-Murray Water

Recreation & Land Strategy Officer
Murray North East Dams (MDBA)
CUSTOMER OPERATIONS

SCHOOLS VCAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

As mentioned previously, in collaboration with Galen College Wangaratta, our VCAL Program was born in the Summer of 2017. Refinement of this program in 2018 ensured Students gain hands on experience in:

- Risk Assessment
- Customer Service
- Incident Response
- Incident Management
- Rescue Response
- Supervision in an Aquatic Facility
- Company procedures and protocols

With an emphasis on inflatable challenge course and inland waterways, this program is being documented to be rolled out as a supporting educational experience to schools within the North East Region.

From a Galen College perspective, we have been most impressed with our overall Aquazone school experience. Our VCE students have taken part in this excursion for their VET Sport & Recreation studies and have significantly benefited from Deb and her staffs experience and knowledge in the Aquatics industry. She has been able to impart the importance of Work Health Safety in an aquatic/work place setting and our students have been able to experience hands on what risks and hazards are prevalent, and how Aquazone as an organisation works towards minimising risk and ensuring the full safety of its participants. We strongly value Aquazone as a vital educational/community link with our VET Sport & Recreation program at Galen College. Our students really loved the day and we look forward to working together into the future.

Denise Rigoni

Teacher Galen Catholic College

DAILY ACTIONS;

Our commitment to safety is demonstrated in literally everything we do, in every aspect of our business and the services we provide. Additional examples include;

| Target market | Needs | How Aquazone delivers |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Family fun seekers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fun activity for the whole family• Safe environment• Suitable for all swimming abilities• Affordable for families | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compulsory life jackets and safety briefing• 1:20 ratio of highly trained life guards• Session size capped at 100 people• Life guards on hand to provide assistance on obstacles• Advance ticket booking to guarantee session availability• All tickets are affordably priced at \$18.00- cheaper than a movie ticket and way more fun! |
| Young fun seekers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcoming and fun environment for teenagers and young adults | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obstacles designed to have fun and opportunities to have a laugh with their mates |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile responsive website and ticket bookings • Opportunities to connect via social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music pumping over the stereo system to add to fun atmosphere • Tickets can be booked via mobile or through Facebook • Photos and videos of patrons updated regularly on Facebook. |
| Group fun seekers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun group activity that includes everyone • Suitable for all ages and swimming abilities • Ability to book in advance and exclusive venue hire • Professional customer service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staff on hand to support group bookings • Group booking page on the website to submit booking requests • Discounted group tickets for minimum of 25 riders • A high level of staff training ensures a professional yet fun customer service experience |



Cont/.....13 ..



4 Describe what barriers have been encountered by the nominee in Customer Service and how have they been overcome

We must LOVE the Hard!!

High risk, seasonal business, in Regional Australia! YEP WE DO!!

Every business has barriers, however an inflatable challenge course on black water (zero / low underwater visibility) in the line of flow on the Murray River in Lake Mulwala, in the holiday hot spot of Yarrawonga, has very specific set of challenges. Considerations included:

| RISK | CON | PRO | OUTCOME |
|---|--|--|--|
| HIGH RISK Water Safety | Drowning, Non-Suitable age groups. Low Visibility in Water, Significant flow, High Traffic, | Complete operational Risk Ass with RMS. Specific Operational Procedures, Safety Briefing, Compulsory Life Jackets, RLSV Supervision Standards | HIGH RISK MEDIUM LOW RISK |
| HIGH RISK WEATHER | Extreme weather dangerous, damage goods, impact trade, impact financial income, | Summer Activity, Risk Ass completed, Trade to RLSV Supervision Standards, Marine Insurance, Manage Wages | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| MEDIUM RISK EMPLOYEE'S | Little/Zero Aquatic Experience, seasonal employment, high responsibility, culture, OHS, physical role, high stress | RLSV Qualified team, all hold 1 st Aid, strong support culture, Clear Position desc. induction, on job training, Supervision, Hierarchy | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| MEDIUM RISK PRODUCT | PVC, Limited Numbers Per Session Per Day, 5yr lifespan Specialist Construction and DE-mobilisation | Short Season makes it exciting, budget for replacement, work with manufacturer re warranty, develop park to cater <Numbers | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| HIGH RISK GOVERNMENT | Conservative Councils, Restrictive Planning Schemes, Goulburn Murray, RSM, Local Council, Risk Adverse | Develop strong and trusting relationships, Take collaborative approach, Work with constraints of each GVT Dept, solution focus | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| HIGH RISK COMMUNITY | Aging residential Pop, limited resident base, conservative, protective of foreshore, impact traffic, isolated location | Community Consultation, identify gaps in services, develop relationships with other traders, create Regional / national identification | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| HIGH RISK PATRONS | Traveling some distance, restricted ages, variety of life jackets sizes, servicing during busy times, safety restrictions, patrons and alcohol | cost effective price point, consumer Focused Marketing committed team to service at capacity, Clear Communication | HIGH RISK LOW RISK |
| HIGH RISK FINANCIAL | Reduced return, Budget blow out, diminished income, weather impact. Trade at loss, or bankruptcy | Unique Business model, respond to market, innovative, manage expenses, create data history, manage c/flow, expenses etc Low \$ buy in investment | HIGH RISK MEDIUM LOW RISK |

An organisation is only as good as it's people. Critical to the business, finding talent became a significant challenge during our 1st Season of 2016-2017. Delays in licence agreements meant we were delayed in advertising for our team, resulting in local Councils having first pick of pre-qualified lifeguards. We undertook an aggressive campaign to attract talent:

- Arranged and Paid for industry qualifications (Royal Lifesaving Vic coming to the Region for a week rolling out the Respect the River Campaign).
- Application process simplified and online
- Paid \$1 per hour above the award rate
- Remunerated according to the Role rather than relative experience
- Uniforms and safety equipment supplied (tri belts for water sunscreen refreshments)
- Systems training pre-opening.

This strategy resulted in opening employment opportunity for individuals that would not have otherwise applied.

However, 98% of the team had zero experience in a supervising and lifeguarding. To support our Team to be confident and effective in the service our patrons, we pulled forward the opening of our

business 5 weeks to mid – November, to provide real time training in the role to which they were employed.

Unbudgeted significant expense:

- Industry Qualification \$12,000
- On Job Vocational Training: \$38,000
- Uniforms: \$3932

The value of this investment was reinforced at our season end. The skill and development to which our team has grown is highlighted in them accepting the Moira Shire Tourism Excellence Award, Finalists in both the Albury Wodonga Business Awards and the Victorian Tourism Awards in 2017.

The greater recognition is: NOT 1 injury or accident has occurred due to poor supervision standards.



Pina Grasso reviewed Aquazone at lakemulwala — 5 star

January 8, 2017 ·

What a great experience - a special mention to the fantastic staff - they were all impeccable in helping our hearing-impaired friend on the water - a special thank you to Pat for assisting to get her across - keep up the awesome work



Thank you for considering our submission.

Deb North Managing Director Aquazone @lake mulwala