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Comments:

1. The time frame for comments has been far too short - 9 or 10 days is quite insufficient for people to find out, and then make submissions.
2. Regional tourism in Victoria is supported by Tourism Victoria in their key districts only. These areas - The Great Ocean Road, Echuca, High Country, Beechworth etc, are worthy areas for support except that they are already successful and already have a high profile. There are lots of other areas of Victoria that have their own intrinsic interest yet receive no attention from Tourism Vic, let alone funding.
3. Regional tourism does not show interest in small tourism ventures. These can give a wonderful experience to visitors and be a lot more personal, but are not supported by any authority. For instance, statistics are only gathered for accommodation places that have a large number of beds. Consequently the figures that are quoted are quite skewed towards the large operators.
4. Bureaucratic and regulatory requirements are a huge burden to small (regional) businesses. For example, we run a B&B with one room only. We have a dairy farm and this size suits us, particularly as we have people to stay who bring their dogs. However, we have to pay an annual fee to our local council for registration as a food preparation premises that is the same cost as a motel serving breakfasts every morning to lots of people.
5. It is extremely difficult to get Vicroads approval to erect signs. The large operators seem to have no difficulties with size of sign and location of them.
6. As new operators of an eco friendly (solar powered) tea rooms and gallery, we have had no assistance, no support and no interest from any government agency. If there are programs for assistance of some kind, then they need to be more freely known - perhaps through the regional tourism boards. I was a member of our tourism board for some years and no information ever came through it about opportunities for eco tourism assistance.
7. Grant applications seem to favour large operators again. Several years ago we applied for a grant to expand our cheese factory, yet we were knocked back due to "lack of market research". That in itself is debatable; however, a large concern was given about a third of a million dollars to develop a new business which fell over after a couple of years, yet there was no accountability and the money collected from the sale of assets did not go back to the government. This makes it very daunting for a small operator to go to the effort of making submission for grants assistance.

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