

On Thursday 28 March 2010 I attended the TRENZ Show in Auckland with Cr Rachel Reese (Deputy Mayor Nelson City Council), Phil Taylor and Paul Davis from Nelson Tasman Tourism. The event was well held at the ASB Showgrounds. The event was also well organised. Those attending compulsory had to wear a large neck tie stating name, who you were representing, whether you were a buyer or exhibitor, or VIP, as in our case. On the floor every region in the country appeared to have a display and major tourism operators such as Air New Zealand Maui Campervans.

The regional displays reflect the importance of the region's place on tourism, with Queenstown Lakes and Rotorua having particular impressive displays. Of course the largest display and support exhibitor were from the larger cities with Auckland taking a huge area. Some of the support booths showed some particular innovative ideas such as motorcycles that appeared to be the Rolls Royce of motorbikes that targeted wealthy people out of the USA. The operator was unsure if his tours came to Nelson/Tasman. The Nelson/Tasman display was modest in size but had very high quality presentation lead by Nelson Tasman Tourism and seven supporting booths:

- Nelson Tasman Tourism
- Abel Tasman Seashuttle
- Stonefly Lodge
- Abel Tasman Aquataxi
- World of WearableArt and Classic Cars
- Grand Mercure Nelson Monaco
- Warwick House
- Wilsons Abel Tasman

All of whom had put in four days at the show and talked to buyers from all over the world who were predominantly young women. Each buyer had scheduled appointments with their selected operator/exhibitor limited to 15 minutes. The first session I had the opportunity to sit in on with Daryl Wilson (whom I was thrilled to meet). The buyer was representing Mexican interests but was unaware of the Nelson/Tasman region or what the Abel Tasman was about. Daryl explained and orientated him and talked about packages Wilson's have available. The buyer explained he had a potential market of well off Mexicans from a population of 100 million. Daryl thought he had only ever had a handful of Mexicans. The actual lead in time from speaking to the buyer to tourists actually coming to your business can be up to two years. Wilson's have been attending the TRENZ Event since Nelson Tasman Tourism started but the cost is now around \$8,000-\$10,000 per exhibitor.

We were addressed twice during the show by the Prime Minister. The key points of his address were that our four main export industries are still hugely important as is tourism and that the government see the tourism industry as a huge potential for growth and that is the reason the government has put in \$50 million for infrastructure and promotion. They expect the industry and regional and district councils to step up and put more money in as well as he saw the benefits for regional economy as being huge and, in particular, next year during the Rugby World Cup when he said we could have up to 85,000 visitors and 1 billion television viewers worldwide.

I would like to express my thanks to Nelson Tasman Tourism for the opportunity to attend this event.

Stuart Bryant