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Snowy Valleys

Destination Brand Strategy

Brand positioning, brand story, brand experience principles, brand architecture

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to introduce a new way of positioning the Snowy Valleys region. This strategy was developed in order to define a tourism brand for the Snowy Valleys region alongside a marketing strategy and implementation plan, as well as a signage strategy. It is a result of the Destination Management Plan, and stems out of the community's desire to increase visitation to the region.

The Snowy Valleys Destination Management Plan establishes clear directions for destination development and clearly articulates Council's vision for the future with a specific focus on tourism.

Strategic themes in the DMP are:

1. LEVERAGING FROM ICONIC NATURE AND HERITAGE ASSETS
2. CREATING A PREMIER CYCLING DESTINATION
3. SHOWCASING REGIONAL PRODUCE THROUGH CONTEMPORARY FOOD AND AGRITOURISM EXPERIENCES
4. REVITALISING ASSETS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCOMMODATION
5. MAXIMISING STRATEGIC POSITIONING, LINKAGES AND TOURISM
6. GOVERNANCE

It's important to note that while there is a lot to see in the Snowy Valleys and are future plans in place for growth and investment, Snowy Valleys region has been the site of tension over the council amalgamation. While there is division over the merger, to outside visitors, 'Snowy Valleys' name is a relatively empty vessel.

While the Snowy Valleys is experiencing growth in both overnight and day-trip visitor numbers, the goal of attracting new visitors, retaining current visitors, and increasing length of stay remains key. Overnight visitation to the Riverina has seen a steady decline since 2013, with holiday visitation declining 18.2% YOY from December 16, the lowest level in three years. Distance is cited as a major barrier for key source markets (Canberra - 2.5 hours drive, Melbourne and Sydney are 4.5 hours drive). Key drivers of visitation from the same report showed relaxation, tranquility, natural beauty and great food and wine, which led to the recommendation in the report that marketing and campaign focus in the area should focus on food, agritourism, nature based activities.

The Snowy Valleys DMP and the community identified a need to develop a strong brand to increase visitation.

No brand will make the drive shorter between Canberra and the Snowy Valleys. Distance from the rest of the world doesn't have to be a detractor - in fact we see it as a differentiator for the Snowy Valleys. It's all in the telling of the story. At a time when people are increasingly seeking off grid experiences and 'tree changes' from urban life are on the rise, we have an opportunity to draw people from their urban lives and guide them through experiences that aren't available in Australia's more urban areas. The Snowy Valleys has always been an area rich in natural features that has forced people to adapt to its rhythms - not the other way around.

That's an increasingly interesting positioning in today's world. It's a unique opportunity to signify that this place is special. To signify that this is a place that forces people to live on the land's natural rhythms requires that we smartly structure our offering, how we communicate with wide and varied audiences, and guide people as they move through the region.

Why change the way we communicate?

Because if visitation is a key goal of the DMP, maintaining the same strategy - waiting for people to discover it - will continue to yield the same result. Now, more than ever, a place to be in touch with the land's natural rhythms is different. This strategy addresses how we'll do it.

What's inside

Positioning a place in people's minds is as much a feature of its heritage, natural features, etc as it is for what you can do there. Strong place brands make it easy for people to identify the sorts of experiences they can have there, and have a consistent story or thread running through the place.

First - what is required for the Snowy Valleys to adopt a strong place in people's minds and attract visitors to the region?

- A **positioning** that clearly highlights what is true of the Snowy Valleys
- A **story** that locals and visitors can tell about what the Snowy Valleys experience is
- **A framework** that guides decision making across what places, experiences and stories and helps the whole region communicates effectively with its audiences
- **Brand architecture** that helps visitors navigate the region and all it has to offer
- **Brand voice** that delivers on the positioning of the brand

Understanding the position of our brand and the story we want to tell

Product - What is the Snowy Valleys as a Destination?

Benefits

- In an increasingly busy world, to slow down and be present is rare. The ultimate benefit of the Snowy Valleys is that proximity to nature combined with the distance from large cities means that it is the place that helps people slow down and be present.

Higher order benefit

Functions

- Proximity to nature is conducive to a mindset of rest and restoration
- Distance from other cities is a forced change of pace and an opportunity to relax
- Outdoor activities aren't consumption based - encourages connection and consideration

What they combine to do

Features

- Quiet towns
- Diverse landscape - waterways, trees, wine country, bush
- Four distinct seasons (one of very few places in AU!)
- Camping, hiking, cycling
- Proximity to nature
- Distance from cities

What you have

Brand Positioning

Snowy Valleys

THE CUSTOMER

'Soft' adventurers* who seek out places where nature is still strong and vital enough to influence our way of living.

Insight: We discover the best version of ourselves when the follow the land's natural rhythms.

*Note: This is not a customer facing 'name', for internal purposes only

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Problem: We're out of sync with nature

Vision: A world that forces you to slow down and be present

Mission: Highlight the land's natural rhythms

Promise: Find the rhythm you need

THE SNOWY VALLEYS

Snowy Valleys is the place where people have always had to adapt to the land's natural rhythms - not the other way around. Proof points:

• Small batch producers
• Handpicked apples
• Hunter gatherer history
• Stockman heritage
• Seasonal festivals

Belief: Spend some following the land's natural rhythms, and you'll find that good things take time— and time makes things good.

Always in season.

Brand experience principles are the 'how' of what a company does. They help us make decisions about what sort of visual identity will serve the business' objectives, how people will experience the brand and how the brand should be working towards the future in order to reinforce the desired position in people's minds.

To help people believe and experience the idea of always in season, we:

Move to the land's natural rhythms.

We move to the seasons, and we help people understand the seasons, the natural landscape, and how to make the most of it.

Honor the fact that good things take time.

How long does it take to make things? What is the value in taking the scenic route? Help people see the value in slowing down by showing what it takes to make produce, craft, and experiences.

Help people meet the makers.

We succeed when we share a story about makers. We share the insights into why they make what they do. Call out the poetic, the quirky, and the hard trade-offs they make to pursue their work.

Never fussy for fussy's sake.

When you're dealing with nature, what you see is what you get. Never put on pretense. Instead, we celebrate practicality.

Brand Story

Remember when 'seasons' meant more than 'different temperatures'?

When 'modern conveniences' didn't allow us access to a mediocre version of anything we want, all year round? When we able to enjoy the months of anticipation before excitedly realising what we've been waiting for is *finally* in season?

Well, there's a place– tucked away just past the mountains, but just before the plains– that still runs to the rhythms of the seasons. Where you have to wait for Spring for the snow flows to melt into crystal clear streams perfect for flyfishing. Where you have to wait for our cool summers to arrive for the harvest of the grapes that make for truly unique, small-batch wines.

Where you have to wait for winter to drop natural, pure, fluffy snow on the slopes of Mount Selwyn.
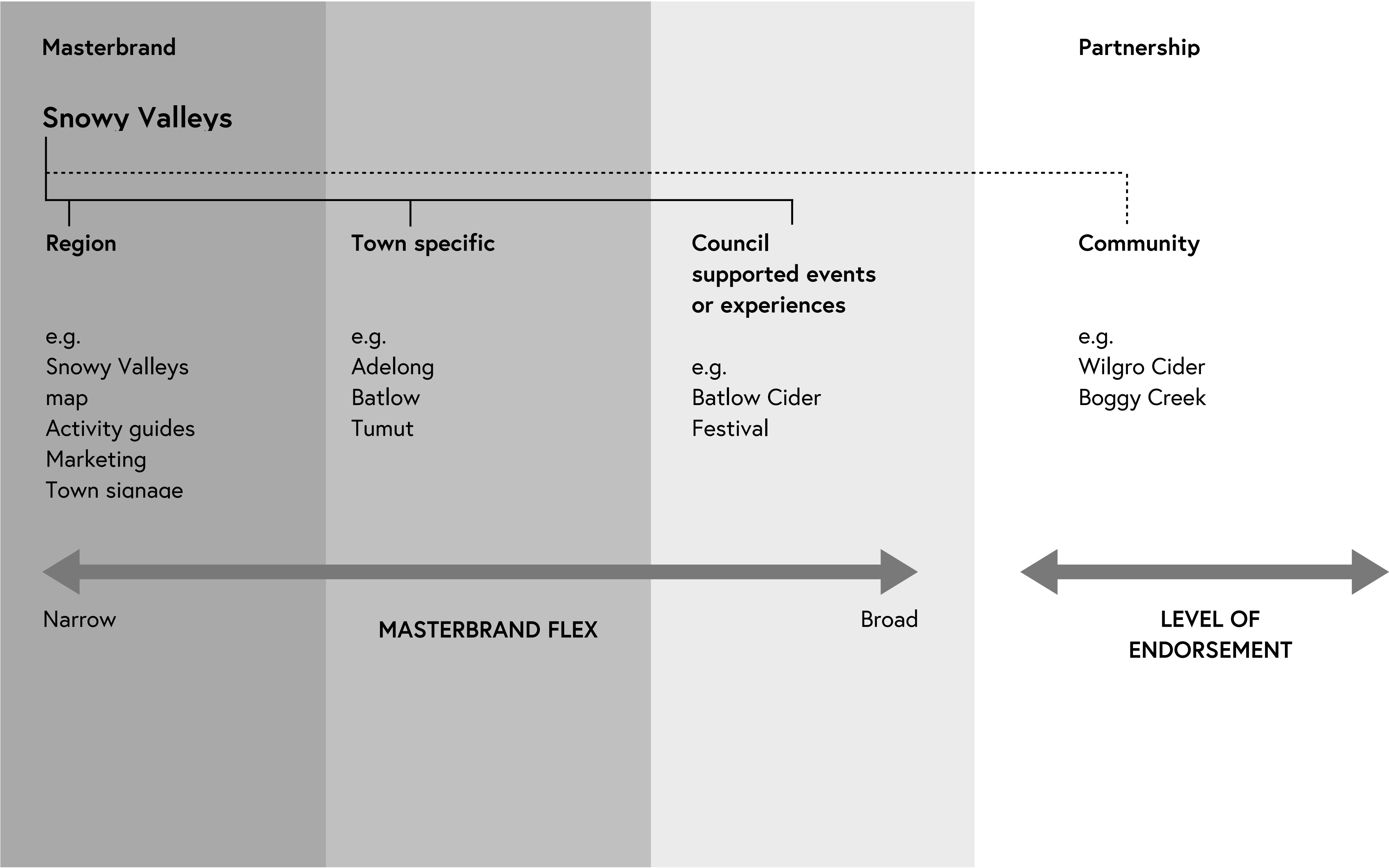
But that's the beauty of true seasons– while you're waiting for the next one, you can enjoy the joys of the one you're in.

So come, visit the Snowy Valleys– and find out what's in-season.
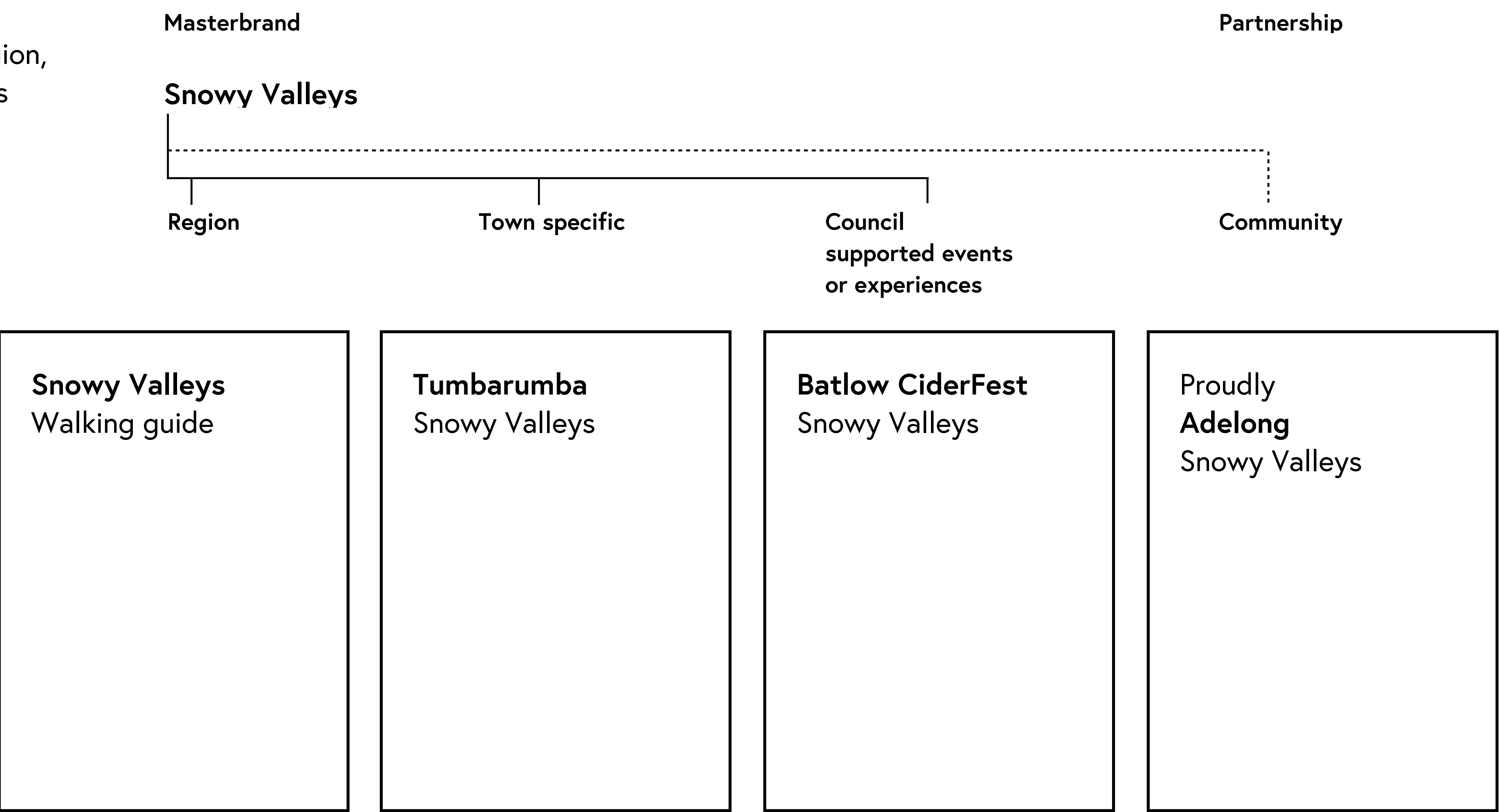
Brand Architecture

The Snowy Valleys brand architecture is structured to:

- Help visitors navigate the region
- Make space for the distinctiveness of the towns
- Allow specific towns, events and experiences to shine while keeping a connection to the master brand
- Give partners (local tourism operators) a place in the brand that can be linked back to the Snowy Valleys

Masterbrand

Snowy Valleys

Partnership

Region

Town specific

Council supported events or experiences

Community

e.g.
Snowy Valleys map
Activity guides
Marketing
Town signage

e.g.
Adelong
Batlow
Tumut

e.g.
Batlow Cider Festival

e.g.
Wilgro Cider
Boggy Creek

Narrow

MASTERBRAND FLEX

Broad

LEVEL OF ENDORSEMENT

Brand Architecture Examples - Rules to Be Finalised in Style Guide

Depending on the communication, region, town or event takes centre stage.

Masterbrand

Snowy Valleys

Partnership

Region

Town specific

Council
supported events
or experiences

Community

Snowy Valleys Walking guide	**Tumbarumba** Snowy Valleys	**Batlow CiderFest** Snowy Valleys	Proudly **Adelong** Snowy Valleys

Living between moments.

Most of us are on the clock. We're working 9-to-5, 5-of-7. We're ruled by calendar invites, phone reminders, quarterly forecasts, school terms… but these systems can't follow us everywhere.

The Snowy Valleys is a place where the seasons aren't evenly distributed. Where the fruit grows best on the hills the machines can't handle. Where the calm-looking rivers are a source of furious power, and where it's most peaceful in the heart of a crowded forest.

To communicate the specific and timeless essence of this place, we need to evoke the feeling of living between moments– with language that speaks to the heightened awareness and unusual rythm that can only come from breaking free from schedules.

Voice principles

Timeless

We're about being 'off the clock'– so our language should help people feel like they're frozen in a single moment, able to experience everything at their own pace.

We do: Use cadence to consciously manipulate the ebb and flow of our communications.

We don't: Make time puns or references for the sake of it– we're trying to express a very specific experience of time.

Evocative

Being beyond time means experiencing everything in a heightened, tactile way– so we should use vivid, immediate language to evoke this experience.

We do: Try and find new ways to put the reader 'in the moment', as if they're there experiencing what's being described.

We don't: Veer into flowery, ornate or overlong prose. Less is still more.

Specific

Taking the time to appreciate the finer details reveals a world of new information and experiences– and to demonstrate that, we need to dive deep into specifics of what we're talking about.

We do: Do research to make sure we understand the nuance of what we're talking about.

We don't: Bore the reader by overloading them with details and data.

Thank you