

2022 Judging Panel Member

RACHEL SMITH

Executive Assistant Manager Commercial Novotel Sunshine Coast Resort

With more than 20 years of tourism industry experience spanning across hospitality, tourism and aviation, Rachel Smith is a passionate tourism industry advocate. Over the past 7 years, Rachel has redefined business events at Novotel Sunshine Coast Resort and the Sunshine Coast Convention Centre, transforming the traditional business model to better leverage the potential growth in Business Events and future proof for business success whilst focusing on improving facilities for Leisure guests. In addition to playing an instrumental role throughout the 2018 resort sale from Abacus Group to Shakespeare Property Group, Rachel has lead the project management of a \$10M purpose built Sunshine Coast Convention Centre, refurbishment of accommodation rooms and bungalows, guests facilities and resort lobby. Her commitment over the past 7 years of researching and analysing not only the Sunshine Coast events sector but also major competitive destinations to gain key stakeholders approval for significant investment in the resorts infrastructure. More recently navigating the business through COVID 19 with dynamic shifts to ensure the business remain commercially focused and sustained.

Prior to her Sunshine Coast tenure, Rachel worked in senior management positions at multiple 4 and 5 star hotels as an active member of TTNQ, pro-actively selling the destination and dedicated to developing tourism in the TNQ region. Whilst based in Cairns, Rachel worked with key partners such as the Cairns Convention Centre and Business Events Cairns as well as holding a committee member position for Cairns Amateurs in 2012 & 2013. Rachel has also been involved with high profile major events such as ATE Cairns 2014, Davis Cup 2010, G20 Finance Minister Meeting 2014 and Challenge Cairns.

Amongst the accomplishments for Novotel Sunshine Coast Resort, Rachel has led the team in achieving Gold at the Queensland Tourism Awards and Bronze at the Australian Tourism Awards in the business event category in 2018. Within the Accor network over the years, the Sales & Marketing team has been awarded for Excellence the Resort for Innovation and Rachel personally recognized as an Australian finalist in Financial Excellence for the Kim Mooney Award in 2016.



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