

INCREASED SPENDING IN AUSTRALIA PUT DOWN TO NEW MARKETING STYLE



The tourist industry in Australia represents 4.7% of GDP and accounts for 6% of the workforce. In other words, this area of the economy is of extreme importance to the south Pacific nation.

Therefore, news that 2006 has seen a 12% increase in the amount of nights, which foreign visitors are staying in Australia and that these tourists are generally spending more comes as music to the ears of the Australian government and to its tourist boards. Indeed, the average tourist now spends around \$2665 per trip. The reason for the recent success in attracting higher-spending people has been put down to a change in the style of Australia's marketing campaigns.

Tourist boards used to present Australia as a low-budget target destination for youths. Most people would have seen a famous 1980's advertisement where Paul Hogan suggests American tourists to sample Australian culture with the words "I'll slip another shrimp on the barbie for you". This commercial, stereotyping Australians as crude, unsophisticated and uncultured, had a certain level of success. However, it mainly attracted travellers, who were aiming to experience this unsophisticated lifestyle at first hand, therefore not spending a huge amount of money.

Much fuss has been made about a recent \$180 million advertisement about Australian tourism in which the country is humourously portrayed as wild, expansive, almost uninhabited, and exotic with incredible wildlife. We are firstly introduced to an outback bar scene, a relaxed and almost empty environment. Then, the action moves to some young locals talking about having removed some sharks from a swimming pool. The final scene, almost inevitably, involves a bikini-clad girl asking tourists "where the bloody hell are you?". This commercial, along with similar advertising campaigns have so far heeded excellent results in attracting higher-spending tourists to Australia. There was clearly a need to present Australians as a little more than wild and uncultured.

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