



FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

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TRAVEL TRIBE SURVIVES **Spirit for travel lives on in the face of crisis**

SYDNEY. 16 April 2009 — When it comes to holidays, Australians are more than ever dividing into two tribes – the committed travellers and the stay at homes – according to recent research by global insight and information group TNS.

In TNS' Global Financial Crisis study, conducted in December 2008, it was found that one in two Australians plan to cut back on travel, domestically or overseas, with the credit crunch intensifying a pre-existing trend for Australians to join one of two tribes.

According to Director of TNS' Travel and Leisure division Carolyn Childs, whilst the findings hint that the tribes are similar in size, the gap between what people say and what people do is clearly reflected in the downturn being experienced by the tourism market.

“Unfortunately, the stay at homes – those for whom holidays are becoming increasingly distant – currently comprise the larger of the two tribes, with the number of travellers who will keep holidaying no matter the price, continuing to shrink.

“The stay at homes tend to be white-collar, full-time workers who own their own home, with or without a mortgage, or have some other commitment, whilst those still travelling tend to have fewer commitments. In the current environment with lots of discounting, there are more opportunities for the footloose and fancy free to indulge their passion for travel.

“But neither life stage nor psychographics alone can explain propensity to travel – it is about mindset as much as about demographics.

“Even in the current climate, the traveller tribe generally feels less pressure and more at ease with life, and gains fulfillment from getting out and having new experiences, whereas the stay-at-home tribe feels under pressure, less at ease with life and gains fulfillment from possessions rather experiences.

“The stay at homes feel pressure to keep up with the new must haves and display that they have made it in life through possessions rather than holidays, unless bragging rights are involved.

In February, TNS conducted a follow-up survey with 1,000 Australians, asking what would encourage people to take a short break or holiday in Australia in the next 12 months.

Overall, one in four said they would take more short breaks or holidays if their ‘ability to get time off when I need it’ improved. However, amongst full-time workers, getting leave emerged as a barrier for one in three.

According to Childs: “There are push and pull factors involved. On the pull side, anything that lowers the barriers to decision such as more flexible leave policies, a focus on shorter breaks (even staycations and nanocations) and all inclusive pricing will help.

“But at the same time, we do need to acknowledge the very real fear that employees have about taking leave in the current climate. For many employees, the perception is ‘out of sight, out of job’.

“So a big push factor is for employers to demonstrate clear commitment to the benefits of a holiday in terms of renewed productivity and in acknowledging the positive contribution of leave takers. In many cases, it may be about making clear that the balance sheet issue is one of *saving* your job.”

The findings resonate with Tourism Australia’s ‘No Leave, No Life’ campaign set to launch in April with the aim of helping Australian companies and employees find and plan domestic holidays.

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