



# media release

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## **RURAL & SMALL TOURISM OPERATORS GET BOOST**

A review of tourism portals has revealed regional and small tourism operators are turning to the web to increase their visibility among interstate and international tourist markets.

Australia's central tourism information network, Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) has just signed leading tourism website, About-Australia.com, which is ranked in the top five by search engine *Google* for the search term "Australia".

ATDW General Manager Liz Ward said this was a great boost for regional and smaller operators and had already resulted in a substantial increase in enquiries and bookings.

"The partnership with About Australia gives smaller operators a greater voice and more opportunity to be found in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

"Whether they're a global organisation or a rural tour operator, everyone deserves to be found," Ms Ward said.

About Australia's David Shirley said, "By publishing ATDW information, we amplify the share of voice currently provided by regional and state tourism bodies.

"In April 2006 alone, About-Australia.com showcased more than 827,000 ATDW Product Pages, with more than 18 per cent of users accessing operator's websites, sending emails or calling the operator directly."

According to Hitwise ([www.hitwise.com.au](http://www.hitwise.com.au)), the leading online competitive intelligence service, the number of Australian Travel Destinations & Accommodation websites visited by Australian Internet users within past 12 months has grown substantially.

During April 2005, Australian Internet users visited 665 local Travel Destinations & Accommodation websites. One year later, during the month of April 2006, the number of Australian based Destinations & Accommodation websites visited by Australians grew to 1,244 sites.

Mr Shirley said, "Covering all the major tourism information categories for Australia, visitors to About-Australia.com can plan their Australian holiday experience online and have easy access to supplier web sites or booking agents.

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“Distributors of ATDW content and online marketers can take advantage of information which is managed by Australian State and Territory tourism organisations and updated daily to the ATDW national content platform.

“It’s a great co-ordinated service available to the industry, which ultimately benefits both operators and holiday makers” Mr Shirley said.

The trend to online has soared since government tourism organisations across Australia established the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) in 2000.

There is now a national platform where tourism information can be standardised and the ATDW system provides a central distribution and storage facility for tourism product and destination information from all Australian states and territories.

Ms Ward said, “For tourism operators, it’s the fundamental step in breaking into the online marketplace, for travel distributors it’s a service to value add to their web sites and cut their content management costs.

“While for international and domestic consumers, when they access Australian tourism web sites they find information in a consistent format which adheres to the national standard.”

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