



# MEDIA RELEASE

**MARTIN FERGUSON**

Minister for Resources and Energy  
Minister for Tourism

**SENATOR NICK SHERRY**

Minister for Small Business  
Minister Assisting on Deregulation and  
Public Sector Superannuation  
Minister Assisting on Tourism

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## ONLINE CAPABILITY VITAL FOR TOURISM GROWTH

A snapshot of internet use among travellers confirms the opportunities available to the Australian tourism industry by improving online capability.

The new report by Tourism Research Australia shows an increasing number of international and domestic travellers are using the internet for both information and bookings.

This trend was most pronounced for international visitors with 62 per cent using the internet for information and 42 per cent for travel bookings prior to visiting Australia in 2010, increases of 17 per cent and 38 per cent respectively on 2007. Last year, 37 per cent of domestic overnight trips involved using the internet as an information source for travel with 27 per cent of domestic overnight trips using the internet for travel bookings, up 10 per cent and 20 per cent respectively on 2007.

Airfares and accommodation were the most commonly booked services.

Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP said the new data simply reinforced how crucial it was for tourism operators to have an online presence and booking capability.

“As with any service industry, businesses must cater to the needs of consumers to stay in the game,” Minister Ferguson said.

“Tourism is no exception and with more and more travellers using the internet as a source of information and to make bookings it is absolutely critical that tourism operators adapt their businesses to take advantage of online opportunities.

“Emerging strong growth markets, particularly in Asia, offer an opportunity for tourism operators to convert internet use to bookings with bilingual websites and real time online booking software.

“The Government is helping tourism operators to capitalise on this by working with state and territory governments and industry to develop a National Online Tourism Strategy and a tourism e-kit due for release later this year.

“Online marketing is also a key focus for Tourism Australia and is at the heart of the *There’s nothing like Australia* campaign, with the latest phase aimed at boosting domestic travel by sharing Australian holiday experiences online.”

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, reiterated the potential of new internet opportunities.

“While internet presence is high for Australian tourism operators, their booking and payment capabilities remain low,” Senator Sherry said.

“Companies not investing in the full range of web capability risk losing out on a large slice of potential income.

“The Gillard Government is supporting small-to-medium businesses take advantage of the enormous online opportunities offered by the National Broadband Network through its \$12.4 million Digital Enterprises initiative.

“I urge businesses in the tourism sector to take advantage of this new opportunity to expand their online presence,” Senator Sherry said.

TRA’s *Snapshots 2011: Internet use in trip planning and booking* is at [www.ret.gov.au/tra](http://www.ret.gov.au/tra)

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