

# Free mice marketing research and marketing communications by the association of a...

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



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## **Introduction**

The Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) is a destination marketing organization that consists of individual city and regional bureaux dedicated to marketing of their regions as appropriate destinations for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE). However, the bureau is concerned with the promotion of Australia as a whole. The AACB is particularly mandated with the responsibility of marketing Australia as a destination where visitors can find a variety of attractions and facilities that can suit their business and pleasure needs. The objectives of the AACB are twofold; first, it's mandated to conduct sales and destination marketing activities, and secondly, to coordinate and offer advisory services. The specific roles of the AACB are summed up in five main objectives; first, to market Australia as a leading business event location, secondly, proactive in securing business events holding in Australia, Coordinate Incentive rewards travel programs. It was an effort to ensure optimum attendance of delegates. Lastly, to exchange ideas, develop networks and trade contracts (AACB,

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2007). The subsequent part of the paper presents a discussion on MICE marketing research followed by an analysis of the marketing communication approaches employed by the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux.

## **MICE Marketing Research**

The main market segments for the AACB abroad include the United Kingdom, North America and South East Asia. However, there are other markets that have recently become of interest to the AACB such as china and India due to the relative growth that the economies of these countries have experienced over the last decade (AACB, 2007). Comparing the viability of two main markets for the AACB majorly, the UK and the USA/North America; it is noteworthy that Americans are less frequent visitors of Australia as a location for MICE purposes. However, the destination is still favoured by businessmen from the United States who hold conventions and business meetings in Australia (Dwyer & Forsyth , 1996). On the other hand McCabe, Poole, Weeks & Leiper (2001) note that France is a major foreign currency earner for the MICE industry in Australia since it receives a huge number of MICE related visitations from France. In comparison to the North American market, the French market offers Australia the most promising potential for growth. On this premise, the subsequent section delves deeper into the prospects that the French market presents for the Australian MICE market and the opportunities and challenges that accrue to the AACB (McCabe, Poole, Weeks, & Leiper, 2001).

The potentials that are eminent in the French market for tourism in Australia are varied as much as the intentions of the tourists are while visiting the

country. Among the benefits that accrue to the Australian Tourism market and essentially on MICE related expenditures; data projections show that 37% of tourism returns from France to Australia are spent on conference fees while 26% is spent on accommodation. The data also reveals that up to 14% of the revenues earned from France alone are shopping related where visitors tour parts of Australia making purchases on various goods and services. Another 3% of the revenues from France is spent on recreational activities. These statistics show how crucial the French market is in the sustainability of the objectives of AACB and ultimately the generation of revenues from MICE related activities (Monge & Brandimarte, 2011).

Other benefits that accrue to the Australian economy especially about the impact of events meetings, incentives and conferences, are the improvement of infrastructure with regard to the development of regional tourism destination sites in Australia. This development also serves to market the destinations when visitors convene in such locations. Ultimately, the MICE generated activities for various regions in Australia all combine to promote the entire Australian destination as a whole. This is central to the objective of AACB since it development of Australia and its promotion as the most preferred MICE site by visitors from all over the globe (Pacaud, Vollet , & Angeon , 2007).

Exhibitions play a central role in attracting visitors from France to Australia with respect to gambling. Visitors from France have been found to delay daily from departing from Australia after their normal business meetings have concluded so that they can partake in the gambling activities, in the country entertainment spots. Notably, the reason behind this development is the

legislation in Australia, which is not very strict about gambling. The autonomy is what makes visitors want to lengthen their stay in Australia so that they can engage in gambling activities. The premise that French regulations on gambling are stricter than those in Australia, French visitors enjoy the freedom that comes with visiting Australia by taking advantage of such exhibitions. Ultimately, exhibitions such as gambling earn the Australian economy foreign revenues from the French market crucial in achieving and sustaining the goals of the AACB (Dong & Torgler, 2010). The potentials that arise from the French Market to the AACB are abound ranging from business conferences, corporate meetings, and delegates conventions. These are the key drivers of the visitations that Australia receives from the French Market. Hence the French market on this premise is targeted since it is ideal for presenting opportunities for Australia facilities to host visitors from France during such meetings. Essentially, the main pool of business for the AACB presented by the French market, therefore, are business meetings, conferences and delegates conventions (AACB, 2007).

## **Marketing Communications Plan**

A marketing communications plan proves useful for any destination marketing organisation that is bent on ensuring the success of its destination in meeting its objectives. Hence for a DMO such as the AACB the marketing communications plan would adopt six fundamental activities that are focused in promoting Australia as the most appropriate destination for MICE related activities.

First, Bidding is a marketing process where the bureaux prepares bid

documents , presentations, promotional DVDs, and support materials for both national and international association conferences. In addition to this, the AACB coordinates meetings and incentive travel groups to encourage more visitations. Secondly, the AACB bureaux engage in what is called Delegate Boosting. In this marketing approach, once a piece of business has been won, the subsidiary component of the AACB in the various regions in Australia combines their efforts to maximise on the attendance of the delegates in the business event. Among other activities Delegate, boosting encompasses mailing participant to notify them of the convention and offer them an invite. It also encompasses the use of e-mail as a method to reach out to potential attendees ensuring that they have knowledge of the place, date and duration of the business meeting. Further, delegate boosting encompasses running advertisements about the delegates' conference in magazines, journals, websites and the likes that can access potential attendees to the conference. Central to the success of the delegation is the publicity campaigns. The AACB makes it its priority to ensure that knowledge about the conference is well publicised and reaches the most potential attendees as possible.

Thirdly, the AACB also develops Sales Leads that are central in identifying the potential of revenue earnings that MICE activities present for the Australian economy. Cognizant of this fact, the conferences secured by the bureaux are provided in the form of calendars that members can employ in enabling contact potential clients directly. Similarly, members can use this calendar to make appropriate plans in stocking up their products in readiness for sale during the event.

The fourth marketing strategy employed by the AACB involves education. AACB developed educational programs for Australian buyers to minimize exploitation by unscrupulous business people who are conscious that they are dealing with visitors. Likewise, the AACB makes investments in educating staff members that eventually leads to the development of their skills and knowledge. This is achieved through scholarship programs supported by Tourism Australia in conjunction with other organizations.

The fifth promotional approach is the use of Trade fairs. The bureaux often working in partnership with business events Australia sends representatives to the major industry trade shows. This it does in an attempt to identify co-operative marketing opportunities and coordinate participation in Team Australia Trade Events. Lastly, the AACB employs Research and Development as part of its agenda in improving the image of Australia as a destination. Its research is particularly focused on identifying potential sales leads from a variety of sources. Similarly, the bureaux also conduct an examination of the delegate conventions held in Australia to assess their impact on economic activities in the country. This information is useful in projecting the financial benefits that can accrue from the hosting of similar events in the future.

## **Conclusion**

This paper analysed MICE marketing research and the Marketing Communications of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux. The AACB is a destination management organisation focused on promoting Australia as a destination for MICE related activities receiving visitors from

far and wide. The paper establishes that Australia as a destination with numerous opportunities in regard to MICE related functions. Essentially, the discussion is biased on the potential an opportunities that the French market presents for the development of the industry in Australia. The main attraction for visitors from France to Australia has been noted to be business conventions, meetings and delegate conferences. These are found to provide the bulk of the business that the AACB receives from France. Secondly, the paper has discussed the marketing communication techniques that AACB has employed in promoting Australia as a destination for MICE activities. There are six general approaches to marketing communication employed by the AACB that encompass; education, trade shows, research, sales leads, delegate boosting and bidding. In essence, the paper is a comprehensive analysis of the MICE marketing and marketing communication approaches employed by AACB as presented.

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