

Ireland

Key Market Message

Trade are continuing to report a competitive environment, with bargain-hunting consumers favouring internet quotes and direct bookings. There is a reported shift in consumer purchasing from taking many short haul holidays per year to taking one main holiday; this, combined with increasingly competitive airfares to Australia in the market, will hopefully heighten the attractiveness of an Australian holiday.

Despite the sharp downturn of the Irish economy, as well as some recent negative media coverage claiming there were few job opportunities in Australia for young Irish backpackers, the youth segment is performing particularly strongly, with Irish Working Holiday Visa grants up by 41 per cent for the July 2008 to May 2009 period, relative to the previous year.

Source: Anecdotal feedback from trade,
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financetopics/recession/5632886/Irish-economy-is-the-sickest-of-them-all-IMF-study-claims.html>
http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/labour_market/current/lreq.pdf.

News accessed on 20 July 2009.

1. Key Market Results and Achievements

- Tourism Australia ran an online search activity from May to June 2009, driving over 18,000 visits to Australia.com.

2. Australian Travel Market

2.1 Market performance

- Irish arrivals in May were 3,200 representing an increase of 1 per cent relative to May 2008. In the year ending 31 May 2009, there were 68,200 arrivals, a decrease of 1 per cent relative to the previous 12 months.

- Irish arrivals in June were 4,900, a decrease of 16 per cent relative to June 2008. For the six months to June, visitor arrivals totaled 31,300, a decrease of three per cent relative to the same period in 2008. For the year ending June 2009, there were 67,200 arrivals, a decrease of three per cent relative to the previous 12 months.
- The Department of Immigration and Citizenship reported an increase of 41 per cent in Working Holiday Visas for Irish nationals for the year to date May 2009, bringing the total number of visas granted to 21,960.

Sources: Australia Bureau of Statistics, Department of Immigration and Citizenship

2.2 Airline Issues/Changes

- Emirates and Virgin Blue have joined forces in a new interline agreement to provide a single-ticket option for travellers flying between 13 destinations in Australia and destinations across all continents worldwide.

Source: Emirates press release 17/6/09

2.3 Trade Information Summary (including Business Events)

- Feedback from Irish trade partners is that the environment is increasingly competitive, with consumers shopping around for quotes and booking conversions taking longer. Tactical airfares in the market mean that attractive packages to Australia can be produced by tour operators to encourage bookings.
- Former TUI Travel aviation director Christoph Mueller has been named as CEO of Aer Lingus. He is to join the Irish carrier on 1 October.

Source: http://www.travelmole.com/stories/1137427.php?mpnlog=1&m_id=nvbbbm , accessed 28 July 2009

- As at June 2009, there were 138 qualified Aussie Specialist agents in Ireland with a further 90 agents are in training.

3. Current and Upcoming Activities in Market

3.1 Consumer Marketing:

Dates	Project / Event	Partners
10-20 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Australia initiated the first Visiting Opinion Leaders Programme (VOLP) visit from Ireland for two bloggers - Niall Byrne & Aoife. Both are involved heavily in the online and social media world and blogged a total of 16 times on their respective websites, 'Tweeted', as well as updating their MySpace and Facebook pages during their visit to Melbourne and Perth. 	Tourism Victoria and Tourism Western Australia
July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2009/10 International Media Hosting 	Tourism Northern

Dates	Project / Event	Partners
	Program (IMHP) commenced with Tourism Australia selling in two story angles to Irish broadcast, No Frontiers. It is Ireland's mainstream holiday programme, reaching up to 624,000 viewers. No Frontiers will travel to Darwin and Litchfield for a Working Holiday Visa focus, interviewing case studies from Ireland and showcasing the destination. They will then travel to Tasmania for a separate story on Australia off season/as a year round destination focusing on Launceston's Quamby Estate and the Freycinet Peninsula activities – for the empty nester audience.	Territory and Tourism Tasmania

3.2 Trade Marketing:

Dates	Project / Event	Partners
1 – 16 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Australia ran a co-operative marketing campaign with USIT. The campaign, which had a Youth and Working Holiday Visa message, included displays on 20 columns on the Luas Tramline in Dublin city centre and the Dart and Arrow trains, 500 Dublin buses and 200 Regional buses. 	USIT
June 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish delegates from three Irish companies attended ATE, one being a new operator 	Qantas, Tourism Victoria

4. Media Environment

- The Irish Tourist Industry Confederation said it is disappointed with figures that show an 18 per cent drop in visitor numbers for May compared with the same period last year. The figures from the Central Statistics Office show a fall of 150,000.

Source: <http://www.rte.ie/news/2009/0715/tourism.html> , accessed 28 July 2009

- According to the Department of Health and Children, 226 cases of human swine flu have been confirmed in Ireland. There have been 32 cases of person-to-person transmission. The World Health Organisation says there have been 134,503 confirmed cases of human swine flu and 816 deaths from the virus.

Source: <http://www.rte.ie/news/2009/0728/swineflu.html> , accessed 28 July 2009

Please visit www.media.australia.com for details about Tourism Australia's International Media Hosting Program (IMHP) and general media information.

IMHP supporters can access publicity results at www.publicity.australia.com

5. General Travel Outlook

5.1 Political and Economic Outlook

- In early July, the government confirmed that it would hold a second referendum on the EU's Lisbon treaty on 2 October 2009.
- The decision followed confirmation, given by the other member states at a summit meeting in late June, that Ireland would receive a series of guarantees on issues of concern to Irish voters: tax, military neutrality and abortion.
- The publication of half-year public finances figures has added to concerns about the sustainability of Ireland's budgetary position, as the decline in the two largest tax revenue streams accelerates.
- GDP contracted by 8.5 per cent year on year in the first quarter, while the fall in domestic demand was even more marked, at 15.5 per cent. These contractions were larger than in any other high-income OECD country.
- Exports contracted only slightly in the first quarter. This was far less than in peer countries, where large double-digit declines were the norm.
- The year to the first quarter of 2009 saw a profound worsening of labour market conditions, with a year-on-year drop in total employment of 7.5 per cent — equivalent to the loss of one in every 13 jobs.

Source: <http://www.economist.com/countries/Ireland/profile.cfm?folder=Profile-Forecast>, accessed 28 July 2009

5.2 Outbound Travel

- The Irish are heading overseas on holidays in smaller numbers this year, but it seems that in the few places they are going, they are going in large numbers. Value for money is quoted to be the priority for the Irish traveler, which is reflected in their choice of destination. Many European destinations are top of the list for Irish consumers such as Spain, Portugal and the French Riviera.

Source: <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/irish-plump-for-familiar-hot-spots-to-flee-cash-woe-1818091.html>

- Almost three quarters of people (73 per cent) are to cut their spend on holidays this year and only 11 per cent of accommodation and travel is now booked through third party websites (less than the 14-15 per cent booked via travel agents) a new study shows. Short breaks are also said to benefit with 20 per cent planning to book more short breaks than last year.

Source: http://www.travelmole.com/stories/1137218.php?mpnlog=1&m_id=s~T_Ylmbn

- According to the June edition of the UNWTO (World Tourism Barometer), international tourism declined by eight per cent between January and April compared to the same period last year. Taking into account the results for the first four months of the year and the current market conditions, international tourism is now forecast to decrease by between six and four per cent in 2009, as the pace decline is expected to ease during the remainder of 2009.

Source: <http://news.traveldailyasia.com/newsletters/03Jul09.pdf>

- Qantas has axed 15 aircraft from a current order of 30 Dreamliners due to a slump in global travel and has also said that they would delay delivery of the remaining 15 by four years.

Source: <http://www.independent.ie/business/world/qantas-axes-order-for-15-boeing-787s-amidst-global-travel-slump-1793575.html>

- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) reported that air passenger demand slumped 9.3 per cent in May compared to the same month in 2008, while freight demand was down 17.4 per cent year-on-year. International passenger load factors, meanwhile, have dropped from 74.5 per cent a year ago to 71.2 per cent.

Source: <http://www.independent.ie/business/world/qantas-axes-order-for-15-boeing-787s-amidst-global-travel-slump-1793575.html>

- Etihad has announced a proposed code-share agreement with American Airlines (AA) which, if approved by the US government, will see much closer co-operation between the carriers. Under the proposed deal, Etihad will place its code on a number of services operated by AA between Europe and the US, as well as selected AA domestic flights. Etihad Airways will place its 'EY' code on a number of transatlantic services operated by the US carrier between Europe and the United States, as well as selected domestic services operated by American Airlines beyond New York and Chicago. In turn American Airlines will place its own 'AA' code on services operated by Etihad Airways between Abu Dhabi and New York (JFK), Chicago (ORD), Paris (CDG), Dublin, Frankfurt, Manchester and Milan (MXP).

Source: <http://www.arabianaerospace.aero/article.php?section=air-transport&article=etihad-and-american-agree-codeshare-terms>

6. Next 60 Days

Ireland						
START DATE	END DATE	MARKET	PROJECT/EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	LOCATION	PARTNERS
20 August	20 August	Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Industry update	Travel Trade	Ireland	None