

# Thailand

## **Key Market Message**

*Outbound travel from Thailand was impacted again by the political upheaval in April and H1N1 Influenza in May. Australia remains popular amongst corporate incentive travel companies; business has been confirmed from life insurance and direct selling companies in 2009. The weaker Australian dollar has assisted this demand.*

## **1. Key Market Results and Achievements**

- Positive media coverage from the International Media Hosting Program to Queensland and Victoria on the theme of city lifestyle.
- Three corporate end users attended regional famil to Brisbane and Perth.
- Three agents and one media attended famil to Gold Coast and Melbourne.

## **2. Australian Travel Market**

### **2.1 Market performance**

- Thai arrivals in March were 7,800, a decrease of 2 per cent relative to March 2008.
- Thai arrivals in April were 10,100, a decrease of 9 per cent relative to April 2008. For the four months to April, visitor arrivals totalled 28,800, a decrease of 4 per cent relative to the same period in 2008. In the year ending April 2009, there were 78,200 arrivals, an increase of 6 per cent relative to the previous twelve months.
- Incentive travellers continue to have high levels of interest on Australia as a destination. This interest has been helped by the fall of the Australian Dollar against the Thai Baht.
- Key wholesaler feedback indicated that bookings for April and May were good and it is likely to continue for May as Australia becomes more competitive against Japan and Europe.
- Key wholesalers have been promoting Australia through print advertising by using prices lead packages to cities on the east coast.

## 2.2 Airline Issues/Changes

- There were no changes to Australian schedules from major airlines.
- Fuel surcharge has been adjusted and this will be favourable to the travelling public as a whole.
- Thai Airways, British Airways and Singapore Airlines are actively promoting attractive return air fares to Australia directly to consumer via print advertising. Such activities continue to ensure visibility for Australia.

## 2.3 Trade Information Summary (including Business Events)

- There are 86 agencies and 246 agents registered under the Aussie Specialist Program; 159 have qualified to date, achieving 65 per cent of total registered numbers.
- There are 16 agencies and 83 agents registered under Premier Aussie Specialist Program; 69 are qualified
- Key wholesalers continue to promote collective group itineraries via print advertising, for example, PKG Group promoted farm stays in WA, Global Link promoted group packages to Melbourne and Tasmania, Tour Planner and VTG group are used direct communication with retail agents to promote Australian packages.
- Enquiries for incentive travel have increased.
- Siam Orchard Group continues to advertise and sell Farm Stay package to Victoria. The package was developed after ATE. The agent is a member of the Premier Aussie Specialist Program.
- Premier Aussie Specialist Agents continue to promote “Must Go Australia” campaign via print advertising. The campaign caters to FIT travellers.
- Retail agents are now allocating space in their advertising for Australian products; the catalyst has been the softening Australia dollar against Thai currency.
- Reports from direct sale organisations and life insurance associations indicate that their members are growing despite global fiscal challenges.

## 3. Current and Upcoming Activities in Market

### 3.1 Consumer Marketing:

Dates	Project / Event	Partners
May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit Journalist Program to NSW</li></ul>	STOs

### 3.2 Trade Marketing:

Dates	Project / Event	Partners
1 July 2008 -30 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aussie Specialist Program-recruit new member</li></ul>	All STOs
15 November 2008 -16 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Update trade database, recruit agents for ATE.</li></ul>	Nil
June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ATE</li></ul>	Qantas Airway
1 January 2009 -30 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop packages to support Experience Australia ( Transforming )</li></ul>	Premier AS agents, Thai Airways

### 4. Media Environment

The following coverage featured in the local media.

- Report and feedback on Australia and Thailand Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

*For more information on Tourism Australia's publicity, International Media Hosting Program (IMHP) and results, please visit [www.publicity.australia.com](http://www.publicity.australia.com)*

*Alternatively for general media information visit [www.media.australia.com](http://www.media.australia.com)*

### 5. General Travel Outlook

#### 5.1 Political and Economic Outlook

- Thailand's National Economic and Social Development Board forecast that the country's GDP is going to expand at the low rate of -3 to 5 per cent. The country's economic expansion is really dependant on local political stability and the global economic outlook.
- Thai Baht has gained against the US dollar but has weakened against the Australian dollar.

#### 5.2 Outbound Travel

- Short haul destinations continue to perform well due to low package costs.
- Strong domestic tourism promotions undertaken in April due to the political interruption.

- Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore Tourism Boards are undertaking extensive thematic advertising programs to promote their destinations.
- China, Japan, Korea, Macau and Russia are key destinations heavily promoted by agents.
- Mono Europe destinations are being promoted by their countries national carriers. Those key mono destination are Austria, Spain, Switzerland.
- Outbound travel has been driven by low airfare offers from all airlines.

## 6. Next 60 Days

Thailand						
START DATE	END DATE	MARKET	PROJECT/EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	LOCATION	PARTNERS
1 January	15 June	Thailand	ATE	Agents	Melbourne	Qantas