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TOURISM RESEARCH AUSTRALIA

# TRA Case Study: Caravan Industry Association of Australia

## TRA DATA DISPELS THE 'GREY NOMADS' MYTH

You would be forgiven for thinking that caravan holidays are a pastime reserved for the older generations. This misconception, shared by many, is one that the Caravan Industry Association of Australia (CIAA) has proven wrong with the help of Tourism Research Australia (TRA) data.

Drawing on data from TRA, the CIAA found that travellers aged 30-54 made up the majority (48%) of the 11.80 million domestic camping and caravanning trips in Australia for the year ending September 2017. Those aged 55 and over actually only accounted for 29% of travellers, while 20-29 year olds made up 16%.

Access to this kind of data allows the CIAA to pass on crucial insights to the 3,500 businesses it represents. The scale of this largely untapped market is significant enough to inform marketing strategies and open up new revenue streams for caravan park operators.

As Peter Clay, General Manager of Research and Advocacy at CIAA explains: 'Many decades ago we didn't know much about the industry, so we were going into marketing and other operations with a hunch, and people started to ask where the evidence was to support that.'

If tourism research can benefit the way you do business, you can learn more about TRA Online [here](#).

'I think the major misconception of our industry is that caravanning and camping is just for the grey nomads (55 years or older) but we've found out in the last 18 months that the family market and the under 30s are just as likely, if not more likely, to partake in a caravanning and camping holiday.'

'That was a game changer for us and it showed how crucial access to the right data can be. We mustn't focus exclusively on the over 55s – they're still a very important audience for us – but the younger markets also require significantly more attention.'

CIAA subscribe to TRA Online, an online portal housing TRA's core tourism data. Data is automatically updated on a quarterly basis which keeps stakeholders informed of trends.

Having access to this up-to-date information allows Peter to create a unique dashboard that is tailored to support:

- industry development
- marketing and operations
- commercial services
- research and advocacy
- accounts and financial reporting.

Cross-checking tourism data for the caravanning and camping industry against commercial accommodation, regional travel, and national visitation figures means CIAA can get a clear indication of its performance as the peak national body for the caravan industry.

'I do look at the national figures and how they go up and down,' explains Peter. 'Recently we saw overall tourism figures in WA were down, but in fact caravanning and camping was up, so it is great to cross-check performance.'

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