

Kiwi travelers snap up savings online

Hawke's Bay - 1 April 2008. Kiwis moving fast towards booking their accommodation online

Latest figures from Ezibed.com, the online accommodation specialists shows that online bookings were up 158% this January to March in comparison to 2007 as Kiwis made use of the great weather and traveled more frequently.

With an average booking lead in time of 11 days, Kiwis were using last minute accommodation websites such as Ezibed.com with more frequency when knowing that the weather was going to be good for an upcoming weekend and they could get a good deal.

With Metservice reports indicating warmer weather into May, New Zealanders are predicted to continue travelling well after the Easter break which was a month earlier than normal. Easter is when the traditional summer travel season is deemed to end by the tourism industry.

Commenting on the strong online growth, Gareth Pearce, Director of Ezibed.com said: "It's fantastic that New Zealander's are travelling more within our own country. Certainly the great summer weather has helped, but for the most part, concerted marketing efforts encouraging Kiwis to see their own backyard seems to be paying off. New Zealanders used to be a nation of research online, book offline however that has changed over the past 18 months as people have changed their booking habits and as more accommodation providers display their deals online to the public".

Statistics New Zealand reported domestic guest nights for January up 6% over 2007, but international guest nights were 4% lower. Five of the 12 regions surveyed showed the highest guest nights total on record, led by Canterbury (661,000), Auckland (595,000) and Otago (563,000) but there is currently no data recorded to know how many of these room nights were booked online.

Business received through online channels has certainly increased according to Quadrant Hotel Auckland General Manager Hayden Porter: "We have seen the traveler become more and more comfortable with booking their own accommodation online and we have experienced significant growth year on year through this channel. For the hotel, January, February and March were all strong months with a better than expected April about to begin. We now receive around 35% of all bookings through web based booking channels and this is still growing".

According to Mr Pearce: "There are some great deals on the market at the moment for the months leading up to the ski season. If the weather is going to stay settled then now really is the best time to travel".

Ezibed.com receives over 50,000 visitors per month and is a New Zealand owned online accommodation specialist displaying rates in 7 countries including New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands.

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