



## Tourism is the winner of Rugby World Cup 2003

**SYDNEY 24 NOVEMBER 2003** – Tourism is the real winner of Rugby World Cup 2003 with accommodation bookings for Australia made via the web rocketing to an all time high.

Travelling patterns released by the country's largest accommodation e-wholesaler, Flairview Travel, reports that hotel bookings for Australia, made through the company's two websites – HotelClub.com ([www.HotelClub.com](http://www.HotelClub.com)) and RatesToGo.com ([www.RatesToGo.com](http://www.RatesToGo.com)), grew over 150% compared to the same period last year.

With representation in ten offices worldwide, HotelClub.com and RatesToGo.com attracts over 3 million unique visitors around the world on a monthly basis. The number of bookings to Australian hotels by overseas visitors increased by 125% vis-à-vis the same period last year while domestic bookings increased by 171%.

"What is positive about this increase is that the strong growth in the domestic market is mirrored by that of the international market," said Flairview Travel's Director of Marketing, Ms Chloe Lim

Of the ten countries that made the most number of bookings for Australia in October and November, seven countries (Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand, United States of American, Japan, Canada and Ireland) were participants of the Rugby World Cup 2003. Correspondingly, the number of people searching for accommodation in Australia increase by over 151% compared to the same period last year.

"After a relatively soft start, Rugby World Cup 2003 built up its momentum and has certainly lived up to business expectations to date. While it is a smaller scale event compared to the Olympics in 2000, the key benefit of the Rugby World Cup is that it is held Australian wide. This allows tourism benefits to be distributed directly across all regions. Strong performances from key cities such as Sydney, Melbourne Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Canberra were in line with expectations. At the same time, bookings for regional centres such as Launceston, Gosford, Wollongong and Townsville, where early matches were played, were also significantly higher compared to last year, with an increment of up to 100%." said Ms Lim

While some companies and agencies have reported that the event did not bring a significant increase in volume and sales, Flairview Travel attributes its strong growth to being able to meet consumer needs and expectations.

"Even when travelling to attend a major event, consumers will still continue to seek value and search for suitable price propositions. With our two websites – HotelClub.com and RatesToGo.com, we are able to meet the needs of general consumers. HotelClub.com provides discounted hotel rates with no time limitations ensuring consumers the ability to book and confirm hotels ahead of time at competitive rates. RatesToGo.com, our last minute service, provides consumers who needs accommodation urgently the ability to secure hotel bargains that are released nearer to the matches." said Ms Lim

"On the whole, we believe that Rugby World Cup 2003 has stimulated the Australian tourism industry on many levels. It is always important to leverage on such special events to encourage domestic travel as well as inbound travel. In

addition to short term increase in demand and bookings, we believe there will be long term tangible benefits to the entire travel industry "

**Fast Facts:**

- Top 10 source countries that made bookings for Australia in October and November 2003 are Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand, United States of America, Singapore, Japan, Germany, Canada and Ireland.
- Bookings by international visitors to Australia is up 125% on last year.
- Bookings by Australians to local destinations is up 171% on last year.

Source: HotelClub.com and RatesToGo.com.com sites

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**About Flairview Travel**

Flairview Travel Pty Ltd is a wholly owned Australian company established in 1995 which has become a world leading global accommodation e-wholesaler and specialist distributor of hotel room inventory over the Internet. The company is recognised as one of the few highly successful and profitable e-commerce businesses in Australia – experiencing up to 500% year on year growth since 1999.

**About HotelClub.com**

HotelClub.com ([www.HotelClub.com](http://www.HotelClub.com)) is Australia's largest online accommodation provider. A full accommodation provider, HotelClub.com is a "full service" website offering hotel bookings for up to 12 months ahead. It offers a choice of over 7,000 hotels – at savings of up to 60% – in 35 countries and 100 cities worldwide. HotelClub.com is a global online travel/accommodation service and features its services in seven languages, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. Its head office is in Sydney and customer and product offices in France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States. Personal and corporate memberships to HotelClub.com are available that provide additional discounts and services.

**About RatesToGo.com**

RatesToGo.com ([www.RatesToGo.com](http://www.RatesToGo.com)) is Australia's smartest, accommodation website, developed by Flairview Travel. It is an accommodation booking service featuring rates that are at least 60% less than usual hotel rates. RatesToGo.com offers bookings up to three weeks in advance (similar sites offer 14 days in advance) at over 2,500 places of accommodation, ranging from two to five star hotels, in 250 cities across 19 countries including Australia as well as selected regions of France, Netherlands, Hong Kong, Malaysia and New Zealand. RatesToGo.com is the only accommodation website in Australia to offer a lowest rate guarantee - find a cheaper deal and RatesToGo.com will match it. Services are available in – Chinese English, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish.

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