

# Ideas & inspiration

Welcome to Issue 12 featuring international ideas to inspire Queensland's tourism industry.

## Becoming more personal

Businesses are engaging their consumers emotionally by offering more personalised products and services. As well as adding choice as a way of building more meaningful relationships with their customers, they are also providing them with more ownership and control over their experience with the product. This trend of personalisation is about understanding your audience, exploring opportunities and talking the customer's language.

### Personalised billboard advertising

Imagine walking past and looking at a digital billboard, which is able to determine your gender through face recognition technology – and maybe even your age – and using this information to instantly display an advertisement targeted at your demographic.



Image via: [Wikipedia](#)

This technology has been developed by Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research and can also record statistics such as how long each person has spent looking at the billboard (sources: [Iconoculture](#), [Crave Asia](#)).

It will be interesting to see how consumers respond to this innovation. While the targeting offers benefits to the advertiser, there is also a risk, for example, that offence may be taken if the system gets it wrong and displays a male-focused advertisement to a female viewer.

### Innovation risks: theme park example

New ideas and innovations are key to creating a business edge and continuing to meet evolving consumer wants. However there are risks involved and so all issues need to be considered. An example of an innovation which has not gone to plan is [YourDay's](#) personalised theme park video technology.



Image: [Alton Towers](#)

Offered by the UK's [Alton Towers](#) theme park, guests could hire a RFID (radio frequency) wristband that was read as they passed antennae at various points around the park, including on six of the main rides. At the end of their visit they could obtain a DVD of their personalised CCTV footage.

However, YourDay, the company supplying this technology to Alton Towers has gone into [receivership](#) and there are also privacy issues to consider. The footage being sold to one person also features other park visitors that have been filmed on the same ride. A quick search on the internet shows that some consumers will make their personalised theme park DVD contents available on the internet, such as one visitor's footage on [myspace](#).

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## Heathrow's Personal Rapid Transit System

Businesses, such as [ATS Ltd](#), are creating innovative concepts to personalise public transport. And Heathrow Airport reached operational public testing phase last week (07/07/2009) for their 'world first' £25 million Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) System project. It consists of:



'a fleet of 21 low-energy, battery-powered, driverless vehicles capable of carrying around four passengers and their luggage, travelling along a dedicated guideway.' ([BAA Heathrow](#)). The vehicles are provided to consumers on-demand, who select the destination and are taken directly to that access point. They also share the vehicle only with their chosen companions. Click to view a [video of how Heathrow's PRT will look](#).

## Targeted customisation

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For tourism, the internet helps businesses provide customised products, often making it more cost effective to reach specific groups of consumers. For example, travel website [71miles.com](#) (US) targets consumers within a specific geographic area wanting a short break experience; tailoring information specifically for this market.

On their website, 71miles.com provides information, reviews and daily blogs about destinations within a four hour drive radius of San Francisco. They make their money through hotel deals via a partnership with travel search engine, Kayak. There are many examples of businesses making good use of internet platforms and technologies to develop more personal relationships with their customers.

## Personalising mass products

While travellers have been able to customise their tours and travel plans for years, the personalisation trend is now being used by products that target a mass audience. **Kettle's create-a-chip kit** and Mars, who have **personalised M&Ms**, are prime examples. Being trialled in the US, Kettle's kit allows customers to add and combine seasonings to create their own flavours.

Mars has made it possible for customers to create their own colour choice, messages and likeness printed on M&Ms (see images top right). Imagine the business uses for personalised M&Ms, such as the messages that could be placed on them for customers.



Links: [Kettle's create-a-chip kit](#); [personalised M&Ms](#)

Images: [Mars](#) and [Kettle Foods](#)

If there are any interest areas you would like more information about, or would like to see included in a future edition, please contact [Tracy Vincent](#), Senior Consumer Analyst.

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