

# Ideas & inspiration

Welcome to Issue 16 featuring international ideas to inspire Queensland's tourism industry.

## Credit card payments on the go

Is there anything your phone can't do? Now you can receive credit card payments immediately without the contracts, expensive hardware, monthly fees or hidden costs that are typically required.

In February 2009, Jim McKelvey wasn't able to sell a piece of his glass art because he couldn't accept a credit card as payment. So he started up a company called 'Square' and developed an intuitive App and a small plastic device that plugs into a mobile phone's audio input jack.



Image: [www.squareup.com](http://www.squareup.com)

This enables payments to be processed anywhere you have coverage by swiping the card through the 'Square'. Customers can have receipts sent to them via email or mobile phone and then access them securely online; they can also use text messaging to authorize every payment in real-time. Based in San Francisco and at the moment only available in Beta when it is released worldwide it could be an opportunity for small and 'in the field' tourism businesses to finally bring the flexibility of card payments into their financial mix.

On the subject of Apps, [version 2](#) of Tourism Queensland's iPhone App is ready for download. A new feature for this version is that you can now **shake** the App to reveal an event or attraction in your vicinity.

Is all the media around Apps, twitter, facebook and the myriad of other social media tools really worth all the effort?

Erik Qualman paints an entertaining picture combining graphics and statistics to create a slideshow about the ROI of social media. Check it out [here](#)



## Many hands make the lights work

Staying on the subject of touch screens, the world's largest multi-touch, multi-user, interactive led-wall constructed by [Sensory minds](#) is now in operation at Nurburgring in Germany. The two-piece ring wall consists of a LED display and a multitouch information-wall and impresses by its size: a total surface of 425 square metres, which equals more than 6000 computer displays, is the biggest of its kind.

By direct touch more than 80 users can simultaneously get informed about news and activities. The interactive wall is not only an information but also an innovative advertising tool and medium for public viewing.

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Image: [www.carnival.com](http://www.carnival.com)

## New twist on an old concept

Themed holidays structured around dating is not a new concept, however CNN reported last week that the Carnival cruise ship Elation, sponsored by the world's largest nonprofit singles travel group, will make history by hosting the world's first International Cougar Cruise.

"A cougar is generally known as a woman over 40 who likes to date younger men, but theoretically any woman who dates younger men is a cougar," said Rich Gosse, who came up with the cougar cruise idea.

The ship, which sets sail from San Diego, California, to Ensenada, Mexico, for three nights, is booked for 300 guests and even has a waiting list. Ann Thomas, owner of the Singles Travel Company and organizer of the Cougar Cruise admits that she was hesitant to sign on to the idea but is glad she did.

"We have people flying in from Italy and Denmark", Thomas said. Read the full story [here](#).

## Australia the inspiration behind the new Spacecamper

Another new version of an old concept is the Spacecamper. This soon to be ready-for-export camper is no ordinary camper van. With the large uptake in camping and campervan rentals this VW T5 transporter is able to be reconfigured so the layout can be repurposed for use in multiple roles. The SpaceCamper was designed by young German designer, engineer and entrepreneur Markus Riese, Riese took a year off when he graduated, buying a campervan for 12 months to tour Australia on a surfing holiday.



Without the cumbersome size, lack of speed and cost that a large camper has or the restrictive size and limited functionality of a smaller camper the new Spacecamper has been designed to be versatile, roomy and as responsive as any commercial van on the road today. Have a tour around the spacecamper [here](#) and read more [here](#).

What trends, innovations and new ideas would you like to hear more about? Or is there a particular issue or area that you think we could focus on in an upcoming newsletter. If there is please contact [Tony Quarmby](#), Senior Consumer Analyst.

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