

# While students learn of int'l. marketing, prof. learns about student travel

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**IF YOU AGREE** that marketing students can best learn about international marketing by actually going abroad, then you may be interested in how our AMA Collegiate Chapter planned "the ultimate field trip."

This international marketing course was designed to give students a chance to see at first hand what marketing is like overseas. Specifically, we spent 11 days in Australia, five in New Zealand, and three in Fiji.

We chose the midwinter semester break as the most convenient time for the group to travel. We chose the South Pacific as our area of study because it contains English-speaking countries with cultures similar to our own and because at the time of our Christmas holidays the weather in the southern hemisphere would not hamper our movements.

In the mornings, we had seminars in the offices of business leaders in aspects of international trade, such as transportation, banking, and government regulation. In the afternoons, we took short tours of their facilities.

The students were so well received by their hosts and the seminars were of such high quality that we encourage others to use this type of trip to supplement their marketing curriculum.

**THROUGH OUR EXPERIENCE** we learned approximately two dozen things, some of them surprising, which may be of interest to others planning similar ventures:

1. Don't use a travel agent. It may seem easier to use your local agent, but you may not get as economical a trip — or as good — as you can if you use other resources. In our negotiations with several agents, we found that they would not give us the best price but rather recommended the trip that gave them the highest commission.

2. Do use your carrier to help you with the ground portion of the trip. The airline, in conjunction with that country's tourist organization, knows the area and is most likely to be able to set up what you want for the price you want to pay.

3. Give special consideration to the primary carrier of the ing most of your time. If there are problems, it will have someone right there to help. When you find out at 9 a.m. that your 9:30 speaker can't make it, the local people can find a replacement. A travel agent back home would be useless in a similar situation.

4. Personal contacts are the best source of business leaders



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for seminars. If you have no contacts, ask your carrier, the U.S. embassy, or the chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in the city you will be visiting. They are all willing to help and will find good people.

5. Know exactly what you want before you start to negotiate. Lay out the number of days, type of speakers, class of hotel, times of city tours, meals required, and so on. Present all this information at the beginning so the carrier knows what to work with. Try not to change any of it; this creates problems as well as providing an excuse to raise the price.

6. You can negotiate tour prices. Yes, there are published minimums, but you might be surprised to discover what can be done, legally, to get a reasonable fare. Bargain. After you get a price from one source, go to another and ask for \$100 less.

7. Set the announced price high enough to allow about 10% for unexpected increases such as rate changes and revaluations. Your people will be disturbed if you later have to ask for more money than was originally announced, and they will be upset if the goal toward which they have been saving is increased.

If the extra money is not needed, refund it. We asked for \$30 per person, which we returned, in cash, just before we took off. You might even refund it in the currency of your first country.

8. Insist on a wide-body jet. It is easier to move around and socialize on these planes, and this makes the trip go faster. They are also more likely to have what you want to stretch out.

9. **PROVIDE IN YOUR PACKAGE:** Round-trip travel from your town, transfers, lodging, transportation to the seminars, and city tours. No more. Prepaid meals force some people to eat when and where they don't want to and even with people with whom they don't want to. For those on a budget, meals can

be taken at inexpensive places.

10. The hotels should be inexpensive but with private baths and toilets. The students are going to see the country; they are not there to sleep. Double occupancy is better than triple. That small saving is not worth the price or inconvenience.

11. Make room assignments before you leave. This way people not only know with whom they are rooming but also can cooperate on packing — "You bring the travel iron; I'll bring the hair dryer."

12. Let the parents know you are an instructor and not a chaperon.

13. Don't try to do too much. You can't see a continent in a single trip. We spent a week in Sydney, so we got to know people, learn street names, and see favorite places a second time. If your clothes are in the drawers instead of in the suitcase, you feel more at home.

14. Schedule a half-day city tour for the first day in each new city. It gives people their bearings.

15. Don't overschedule. Allow plenty of free time. Have a maximum of one seminar every three days.

16. **FORGET ABOUT "JET LAG."** The students hit the ground running. Start your schedule from the first day. The students will be too excited to rest.

17. Announce your program early — at least six months ahead of time. This will give the students time to get used to the idea and to save some money. We



Students pose for picture with example of native fauna.

gave nine months notice for the South Pacific trip, and for an upcoming trip to Kenya we extended it to 11 months.

18. Don't overpublicize it. Put up a few posters and make class announcements. Word of mouth will do the rest.

19. Set a token amount of money — about \$25 — as a deposit so you will know who is serious. This will give you a more accurate count.

20. Give something to the students who put down a deposit. We gave them flight bags in which to carry their books. People who saw them with the bags would ask about the trip. Bags are available from the carrier, but you may have to pay for them.

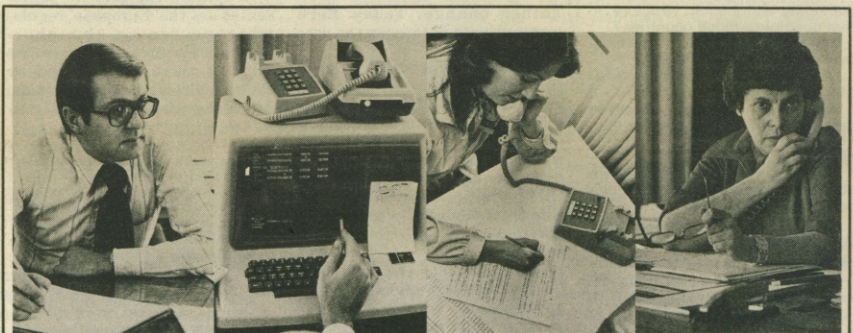
21. Make the departure special. For most, this will be their first time out of the country (and, for some, the first time out of state). If you have more than

15 in the group, the carrier may provide a photographer at the airport for a group picture just before you leave. If not, ask one of the parents to take one. Send copies to everyone when you return.

22. Have a wrap-up party after you come back and after the travelers have had their film developed. It's a good time to exchange pictures and reminisce.

23. Don't think you'll have a vacation. Your colleagues will think you're relaxing, but it will be all you can do to stay 24 hours ahead of impending disaster (such as a threatened strike by pilots).

Your reward will come when it is all over and, as you come through customs, one of the students hands you a \$25 deposit on the next trip.



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### Some facts the students picked up while 'Down Under'

- **U.S. firms** are not permitted to buy communication outlets (such as newspapers) in Australia, but Australians are permitted to buy U.S. media.
- **Because of a union agreement**, there is a stiff surcharge on restaurant meals served on weekends.
- **Landing fees** paid by travelers in Sydney are among the highest in the world.
- **Some Australian bars** are segregated—by sex.
- **Competing domestic airlines** fly exactly the same time schedules. At 8 o'clock in Canberra two different planes take off for the same city.
- **Some of the large department stores** have full-line supermarket sections.

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