



MEDIA RELEASE

BPAY CONTINUES ITS SMOOTH ASCENT IN THE TRAVEL SECTOR

Sydney, March 26, 2008 - According to BPAY's 2007 Usage & Attitudes Study¹, almost one in five Australian biller payers have used BPAY in the past 12 months to make travel and hotel bookings, and a further 43% would consider using the bill payment service for hotel and travel payments.

Couple these findings with the steady increase in short term international departures, and it not surprising that first-class travel companies such as Qantas.com, Flight Centre and STA Travel are among the hundreds of travel-related providers that have experienced a significant growth in its BPAY payments over the past year.

Recent figures indicate an average three per cent month-on-month rise in Flight Centre's BPAY payments from January 2007 to January 2008. STA Travel's BPAY payments also increased by five per cent over this period.

Significantly, since Qantas.com began offering the BPAY option in April 2006, its BPAY payments have soared by an average 20 per cent each month.

According to BPAY General Manager Andrew Arnott, regular Internet banking users - more than five million Australians - are demanding a choice when it comes to making payments, and companies are now responding.

"BPAY makes particular sense for the Aussie traveller," says Arnott. "When a consumer makes a BPAY payment from their savings or cheque account, they know they are not returning home to any credit card bills or accumulated debt."

"Additionally, consumers can avoid a credit card surcharge that is becoming increasingly common."

"The travel industry has already embraced the advantages of e-commerce, with the advent of paperless tickets and online check-in options," said Arnott. "And with more people using the Internet as a travel planning tool, it makes commercial sense for a company to offer their customers the BPAY payment choice."

Travel-related expenses, such as flights, traveller's cheques, phone cards, foreign currency exchange and travel insurance were among the more than 185 million BPAY payments worth over \$10 billion made last year - more payments than any other bill payment service.



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Consumers use BPAY because it is the hassle-free, time-saving option to pay bills any time of the day or night, on any day of the year, from anywhere in the world, through the security of their financial institutions' Internet or phone banking system.

For added convenience, consumers can choose from which of their accounts to make the payment (cheque, savings and for some bills credit card) that can be done immediately or scheduled for a later date.

BPAY is an efficient and user-friendly solution for payment collection that provides benefits for not only the consumer, but for the biller as well, such as:

- Healthier cash flow
- Cleared funds overnight
- Improved customer relations

More than 15,000 biller codes covering companies, utilities and government departments now accept payment via BPAY, including Australia's top billers.

100 per cent of Australian financial institutions that offer phone and Internet banking offer BPAY – which means more than 170 Australian financial institutions, covering about 90 per cent of the consumer banking market, belong to the scheme.

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¹Annual BPAY Usage & Attitudes Study conducted by TNS

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