



DESERT KNOWLEDGE
CRC

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Project partnerships:

Evolving partnerships include:

- CSIRO
- Charles Darwin University
- Murdoch University
- Curtin University
- 4WD Victoria

Associated investors include:

- Commercial desert operators
- Information providers



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4WD Club members in the Desert – a potential market?

BACKGROUND to research:

On track is an interdisciplinary research project, with partners from Desert Knowledge CRC, CSIRO, Charles Darwin, Murdoch, JCU and Curtin Universities, aims to improve the capacity of desert settlements to provide viable 4WD tourism products while protecting cultural, social and natural values.

AIMS of research:

An exploratory study to understand club members 4WD drive experiences, motivations, activities, trip planning, best & worst experiences & trip improvements, and some general socio-demographic information

METHODOLOGY:

STAGE 1: Focus group with 15 4WD Victoria club members in February 2006. The results were used to develop a 4 page self-administered survey.

STAGE 2: Data collected between July and September 2006. Surveys were distributed with the help of 4WD Victoria to their club members. 190 completed surveys were returned, representing a 33% response rate.

SAMPLE: 81.5% male, 72.6% 30-59 year old, 41% families, 22.5% couples, 24% professionals, 58.8% on \$40-79,000/years

RESULTS:

- Deserts ranked third as a **preferred 4WD environment**, after alpine and outback environments. Highest ranking for couples & empty-nesters.
- 46.5% had been on a **trip to the desert** in the last 2 years.
- **Most popular desert destinations** are Simpson desert, Little Desert, Canning Stock Route
- Routes partially **planned** in advance, through WOM, commercial maps, and the internet
- Most **important motivations** are to get away from the city, enjoy landscape, visit remote places.
- **Favourite activities** are camping, develop 4WD skills, visit national parks and local places and to test the car.
- **Least favourite activities** are to visit galleries, visit aboriginal cultural sites, go bird watching, attend aboriginal performances.
- Simpson desert, Canning Stock Route, Kimberley, Central Australia were listed as some of the **best experiences**.

OUTCOMES:

High demand to try new routes

Potential to increase the size of this market sector

Small correlation between period of highest demand and school holiday. No discernable low period

High fuel price was not a major factor in trip planning

Scope to increase information dispersal through the internet and commercial maps

Profile of visitors indicates a higher percentage of empty nesters visit the desert

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

- Studies of other 4WD clubs
- Studies of other markets: FITS and 4WD tours.

