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Adventure travel withstanding slow economy

FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER: Australia's leading adventure trip operator is confident it will withstand the current economic conditions following strong September sales growth.

Despite concerns that the travel industry will be hit by the economic crisis, Intrepid Travel is still recording strong sales, with a 35 per cent increase in passenger numbers in September. The company attributes this to the appeal of its trips as consumers tighten their belts and look for travel options that provide real value for money.

Intrepid Travel has historically recorded sales growth in previous periods of economic slowdown. In 1998 when the global economy slowed, Intrepid Travel's sales grew by 32 per cent, compared to a 5 per cent growth in sales the previous year. Passenger numbers increased by 34 per cent in 1998 compared to 21 per cent in 1997. As the global economy slowed in 2001 and the travel industry coped with the fallout from September 11, Intrepid Travel's sales grew by 4 per cent and its passenger numbers remained on par with the previous year. The World Travel and Tourism Council's data shows that travel and tourism demand fell by an estimated 7.4 per cent worldwide in 2001 and 2002.

"We are confident that we offer a form of travel that will appeal to consumers in tough times," said Darrell Wade, CEO and Co-founder of Intrepid Travel.

"In our experience, people like to travel and they will make changes in other areas of their lives to be able to afford to do so. They will also consider adventure travel as an option as it offers a cheaper alternative to other tour products."

According to Darrell Wade, the real life experiences that Intrepid Travel prides itself on adds further value to their trips, far exceeding the expectations of its customers.

"Over 80 per cent of our guides are locals and they open up places and cultures for our customers, providing them with a travel experience generally not afforded to other travellers," he said.

Intrepid Travel's trips start at AUD \$335 for a six day tour of Northern Thailand (flights not included).

For more information please contact Eliza Anderson on 0410 535 977 or at eliza.anderson@intrepidtravel.com

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About Intrepid Travel

With over 19 years of experience, Intrepid Travel is one of the world's leading small group adventure tour operators. Intrepid offers over 450 itineraries in more than 90 destinations worldwide. Intrepid trips are designed to go off the beaten track, meet the locals and travel in an unconventional way, joining locals on their transport, in their markets and even in their homes.