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## Bright idea gets people moving

### Private Caravan Hire takes off around Australia

**GOING PLACES: Pamela Egan has set up a website called Private Caravan Hire where individuals can hire out their caravans RVs while not in use.**

**Writes Janine Hill**

Pamela Egan calls it a lightbulb moment.

The entrepreneur had been thinking about a friend's caravan, parked for most of the year in his driveway, and while traveling along the highway, she had wondered at the large number of caravans on the road.

Then the light switched on.

Pamela realised saw a opportunity in being able to match all those caravans, like that of her friend, languishing unused in driveways an backyards for much of the year, with people who wanted to hit the road but did not have one.

After some research, Ms Egan, a former business development manager, launched her web based business.

Private Caravan Hire ([www.privatecaravanhire.com.au](http://www.privatecaravanhire.com.au)) is believed to be an Australian first.

The website allows registered caravan owners to link with people who wish to hire a caravan for short or long-term trips or temporary stays, and therefore better utilise an asset wasted for much of the year.

“Why would you have an asset that's so under-utilised?” Ms Egan said.

“We had a holiday unit and we'd rent it out when we weren't using it.

“Wouldn't you approach caravans in the same way?”

The website allows owners to list their own description and photographs of their caravan and to stipulate the conditions of the hire or swap.

Users can browse for vehicles throughout Australia and arrange swaps internationally. PCH's online support includes insurance referral, legal documentation for the hire agreement and practical advice.

Ms Egan said a 16-foot caravan could fetch about \$2200.00 for four weeks hire, but said hire or swap arrangements were a win-win situation for both parties involved.

She said private hire was an opportunity for owners to recoup some of the expenses associated with owning a van. It was also an opportunity for people who were considering buying a van to “try before they buy”, a solution for someone requiring temporary guest accommodation, or simply a cheap holiday alternative.

Ms Egan also sees possibilities for people wishing to better utilise RV motorhomes.

She said the website simply filled a niche that was growing as quickly as people purchased caravans and RV's

“I've just always had this little thing that any time I can't find something that I'm looking for, I think, “how can I fill that gap?” she said.

Since launching the site, Ms Egan had been fascinated at the different hire arrangements people had devised. One owner even delivered their van to a location for a person who wished to use it as temporary accommodation.

The website has proven successful so far for those who have listed early.

John Macnamara, of Brisbane, recently listed his 19-ft caravan on the website after recognising the opportunity.

“I enjoy caravanning but can't do it 52 weeks a year. When I realised there was an opportunity to hire out my caravan for a portion of the year that protected me and my asset, as well as the hire party, I listed my van,” he said.

I had seven responses in two weeks, including two firm bookings. The caravan will be towed to Cairns and back over three weeks and then heads down south immediately after

The fellow taking his family to Cairns is very excited about the trip, and would struggle to accommodate two adults and two children in beautifully appointed, fully self-contained accommodation for a total of \$1500 any other way.”