

GROUP MEMBERS:

Azreen Suffiyah Binti Johari, Choo Jun-Henn Shaun and Chan Chomel

ANALYSING AUSTRALIA'S TOURISM CAMPAIGN

Following border restrictions and lockdowns in early 2020, Covid-19 threatened the very thought of travelling. However, as restrictions start to ease globally, countries like Australia sought this chance to recover their travel industry. The Australian tourism campaign "Don't Go Small. Go Australia." was launched to lure tourists back as the country reopened their international borders in early February 2022 (Yeo, 2022). Furthermore, Australia's SmartGate system for border control upholds and seeks to improve standard border crossing facilitation as borders open.

This essay shall analyse the campaign techniques used to symbolically translate a message of freedom after relaxing Covid-19 restrictions as well as the technological advancement of SmartGate that enhances and compliments these initiatives.



(CBAustralia, 2022)

Great point in noting the frame of urgency and how that is subtly woven through with action words.

Firstly, we analysed the messaging in the campaign slogan: "Don't Go Small. Go Australia.", where the imperative verb 'Go', along with contrasting Australia against not going 'Small' inculcates a sense of urgency to experience the endlessness that Australia can provide everyone. We noted how the campaign video also showcases Australia's vast open spaces, gorgeous landscapes and people laughing amidst nature, appealing to nature goers and adventurous travelers. Aside from showing the vast array of activities unique to Australia, the language used also implied a sense of movement: "-jump in here, slide down there, swing it...pat it, move it" (CBAustralia, 2022), which hints at a deeper messaging of symbolic freedom-something one is expected to feel after the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

This narrative is interesting to compare against Australia's existing border control policies, where they juxtapose the advertised notions of accessibility and movement. In Australia's travel requirements, it is necessary to complete a Digital Passenger Declaration and apply for a Visa in addition to having a legitimate passport before flying to Australia. By buckling down on one's legally prescribed duration of stay, there is rigidity bounding one's ability to travel by time and legal acceptance. The state legalising their ability to nitpick who they want entering in also hints at an exclusivity towards certain groups which enforces what Week 2's reading suggests, Visas can act as the "first line of defence against the entry of undesirables" (Torpey, 2018).

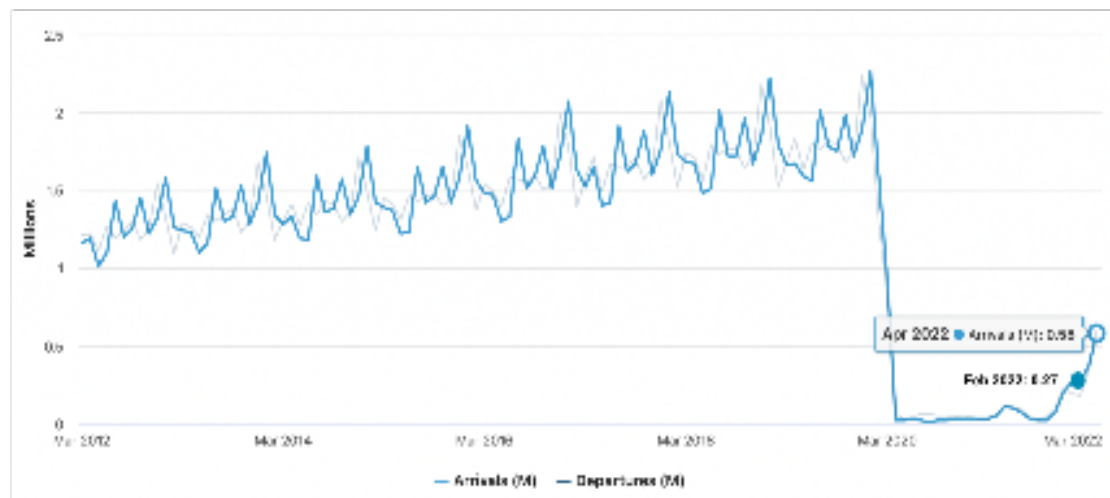
Another implementation Australia uses to portray themselves as an agency for travel while covertly maintaining a sense of exclusivity is through the development of their e-recognition system, SmartGates.

In preparation for allowing an influx of tourists into Australia, SmartGates use ePassports and facial recognition technology (Alternative Airlines, 2022) to verify identities. With all travellers' having "-data stored in the chip of their biometric passport-" (Alternative Airlines, 2022), we note

how advancements in technology have spurred authorising seamless scrutinisation of an individual's identity. Similar to the aforementioned authorisation of Visas, this monopolisation of the authority to regulate movement seeks to "adjudicate claims by [certain] individuals to entry" (Torpey, 2018). Concurrently, another catch to note about this system is that only citizens of certain countries such as Singapore, Sweden, France and other such nations are eligible to use it. This begs the question of exclusivity to first-world countries and the power certain passports hold. Nonetheless, we also acknowledge that while this implementation systemically encourages exclusivity, it still effectively manages to make travelling processes in Australia more efficient and convenient.

perhaps this exclusivity is also part of what is being sold?

However, we also see ways in which Australia's border policies reflect what is being "sold" in their travel campaigns. The motif of freshness and environmental preservation is prevalent in the campaign, through slogans such as "You want fresh? Go catch your own" and other visual stimuli that depict well-preserved natural wonders. Concurrently, Australia's border system sells this system of sustainability and preservation through controlling the food that individuals can bring in. According to Australia's Border Force, they enforce these strict biosecurity restrictions are essential to preserving Australia's environment and 'prevent the introduction of harmful pests and diseases' (ABF, 2022).



(ABS, 2022)

Concurrently, through examining the figure above, we note an increase in number of arrivals from 0.27 million to 0.58 million in February 2022 (month the campaign was launched) to April 2022, which emphasises the impact in which the campaign was able to encourage individuals to visit Australia.

In conclusion, the campaign and SmartGate system complement each other to serve its purpose in bringing people into Australia. The launch of the campaign as border restrictions ease was crucial in reviving the tourism economy in the country. We recognise how the campaign has not brought Australia entirely back on its feet, however campaigns like this are the first step to jumpstarting tourism in Australia again.

Great work in this analysis!

Word Count: 748

I think you made a great choice with the campaign and have done some solid research in explaining the details. The focus on contrasting the "go" element with the "gate" element is effective. The name itself is so intriguing - making no secret of the filtering and inherently dual-faced nature of border control - like a gate, it is both a closure and an opening. Some more reflections and engagement with that and linking it back to what you think is being commodified and highlighted (is it exclusivity? is it safety signalled through the filtering?) in the campaign would have made this thoughtful analysis even stronger. Well done.

A

References

- ABF, 2022. CAN YOU BRING IT IN?. [online] Abf.gov.au. Available at: <<https://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/can-you-bring-it-in/categories/food>> [Accessed 10 September 2022].
- ABS, 2022. Australia's international travel increases. [online] Australian Bureau of Statistics. Available at: <<https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/australias-international-travel-increases>> [Accessed 11 September 2022].
- Alternative Airlines, 2022. SmartGate. [online] Alternativeairlines.com. Available at: <<https://www.alternativeairlines.com/smartgate>> [Accessed 11 September 2022].
- CBAustralia, 2022. 0:14 / 0:30 Tourism Australia 'Don't Go Small. Go Australia' TVC via CHEP Network. [video] Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlt6R5tCJnw>> [Accessed 11 September 2022].
- Torpey, J., 2018. Coming and Going. The Invention of the Passport, [online] pp.8-9. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108664271.003>> [Accessed 11 September 2022].
- Torpey, J., 2018. Conclusion: A Typology of "Papers". The Invention of the Passport, [online] pp.218-229. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108664271.009>> [Accessed 11 September 2022].
- Yeo, M. (2022, February 21). *Commentary: Australia opens borders, after two years and a lot of Omicron hand-wringing*. CNA. Retrieved September 9, 2022, from <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/commentary/australia-open-borders-states-quarantine-perth-melbourne-2505786>