



Convention, Incentive Marketing

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More than 204,000 pieces of luggage are lost or stolen every year while in air transit, and more than 30 million bags are mishandled, costing the airline industry billions of dollars as well as frustrating passengers.

Now a global service has been introduced to reduce check-in queues and ensure luggage does not go astray. Sydney-based Personal Porter offers both individual travellers and groups an online luggage delivery service with real-time tracking via SMS. The service bypasses traditional check-in by picking up luggage at the passenger's office or home and delivering it to a specific address at a destination of your choice.

Another advantage is that the system avoids surprise fees for excess luggage, a plus, given that several major airlines have introduced reduced luggage allowances and increased excess luggage fees.

Personal Porter was founded by British marketer James Garrod, who

worked for Qantas for nearly three years, and Glaswegian engineer Gerry Flanagan, who has worked in ground handling and luggage repatriation for British Airlines and even helped devise the fully flat aircraft bed.

As well as business travellers, the service is ideal for groups that may need to take such equipment as golf bags, skis and surfboards. Personal Porter can handle items weighing from 12 to 32kg.

Flanagan says groups can use economy of scale with the system, so as to avoid individual excess baggage charges.

Garrod says the service will save up to six hours on a return journey for the corporate traveller. SMS alerts tell the traveller when their bags pass through Customs, when they arrive at the destination and when they are delivered.

PCOs, convention centres and hotels can all act as agents for Personal Porter, says Garrod.

● *Personal Porter,*
www.personalporter.com