



# Caravan Industry Association of Australia

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## Caravan Travel Leads the Way in Accessible Tourism

Anthony Wake is a man passionate about providing people with disabilities the same opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors as anyone else. So much so, he launched the first Australian business that designs caravans *for* people in wheelchairs, *by* people in wheelchairs.

September 27 is World Tourism Day and this year we celebrate accessible tourism across the globe. Tourism for all! Accessible Tourism is about creating environments that can cater for the needs of everyone, whether that be due to a disability, getting older and even for families with small children. The Caravan Industry Association of Australia says many of its industry businesses lead the way in accessible travel, whether that be by providing options for a range of budgets, accessible facilities in holiday parks, or even purpose-built caravans.

Anthony Wake is one such example. He always loved camping as an able-bodied person, but found it challenging after suffering a spinal cord injury that left him paraplegic and confined to a wheelchair. He kept at it though, trialling out different set ups with varying success in an effort to continue travelling the way he loved most. Eventually he decided that to truly live the Aussie dream with his wife, a modified caravan would be the answer – and it was! Anthony says, “We were back on the road having a ball just like everyone else. It gave us the freedom we needed to go anywhere, anytime”.

Anthony’s caravan became a point of interest for fellow caravanners and after many suggestions to do so, he finally decided to start designing and building fully accessible wheelchair caravans so others could enjoy the same freedoms. He says, “We design all Accessavans so the user can be totally independent, whether that be a wheelchair lift or a push button jockey wheel. And an unintentional bonus of our caravans is that they actually help able-bodied partners as well”.

Anthony says that as a person with a disability, the biggest issue when travelling can be accommodation because it doesn’t come with all the comforts of home. Added to this, accessible accommodation is in high demand so you often need to book well ahead to guarantee a room or a cabin with disabled facilities. “The beauty of towing an accessible caravan behind you is that you don’t need to worry about these things, you can travel in comfort where you want, when you want.”

There are an estimated 4.2 million Australians with a disability according to the ABS, which equates to about 18.5% of the population. New technologies in caravans have made them increasingly accessible and more and more people with disabilities are enjoying the freedom of travelling Australia’s vast landscapes. Add on a 4WD power wheelchair and sandy tracks, a swim in the ocean or a riverside campsite all become possible. These products truly enable tourism for all and as Anthony reminds us, “We are part of an ageing population, so demand will only grow”.

Ever since its inception, World Tourism Day is celebrated on 27 September for the purpose of fostering awareness among the international community of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic value. Caravan Industry Association of Australia applauds all caravan and camping businesses in Australia that lead the way in providing innovative products and services that support accessible travel. At some point in life, we can all benefit from universal accessibility in tourism.

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**Please use the full name when referring to Caravan Industry Association of Australia, not the acronym CIAA, as several unconnected organisations use this acronym. For further information including requests for comment or imagery, please contact Rachael Morris: Ph 03 9815 2015 or email [rachaelm@caravanindustry.com.au](mailto:rachaelm@caravanindustry.com.au)**

*Caravan Industry Association of Australia is the peak national body for the caravanning and camping industry in Australia. Our organisation's vision is, "To lead and champion a robust, compliant and sustainable caravanning and camping industry in Australia", with all operation pillars – marketing; research; lobbying and advocacy; compliance, accreditation and training – working towards this vision.*

*As the peak national body for the Australian caravanning and camping industry, Caravan Industry Association of Australia represents over 3,500 businesses across the entire supply chain. Many of these industry businesses financially support the organisation by making a voluntary contribution towards a cooperative fund that aims to support the sustainability of the greater industry.*

*In addition, we communicate regularly with consumers who have an interest in the caravanning and camping lifestyle. We maintain an active database of over 313,000 consumers and support this via social media channels with more than 115,000 participants.*





