


**Hostel Owners**  
 Increase your revenue  
 Lower your costs  
 Boost your profits

Cloud Hostel software from  
  
 For a free demo click here

Search for:

**SEARCH**

**SUBSCRIBE TO 'THE BYTE'**

[MOST VIEWED](#)
[MOST COMMENTED](#)

## Is Youcamp a threat to rural tourist accommodation?



Farmers across the country are taking down the 'no trespassing' sign on the farm gate and embracing the sharing economy. Digital start-up Youcamp is making a play to change the way people think about camping by offering travellers and campervanners the chance to stay on local farms.

Glenda Phin has had campers stay on her property at Turlinjah on the New South Wales south coast, among her chickens, pigs and beef cattle. "Most people are looking for an alternative form of accommodation," she said. "Somewhere where they can go and experience parts of Australia that normally you wouldn't be able to, and somewhere possibly a little bit secluded so they can have some time out."

James and Prue Woodford created Youcamp around a campfire in 2013 in order to connect travellers and private landholders (*The Byte interviewed James in September 2016*). Rather than make comparisons to Airbnb, Mr Woodford said Youcamp was more like a matchmaker. "It's a dating agency for travellers and landholders, and I know that sounds a bit glib,

but actually that's what it really is," he said.

"We've got these campers who are looking for special things like being able to take the dog, have a campfire. "Sometimes they want to be noisy, sometimes they want absolute seclusion. "They can actually put those criteria into a search engine and it will pop up with the landholder that offers those particular categories, so it does actually operate a lot like a dating agency."

While there is a growing demand for the service, local councils take different approaches to regulating camping on farm properties. "We take a very clear line that we believe this sector absolutely has to be regulated," Mr Woodford said. "The current situation is that across Australia, basically every council in every state takes a different approach.

"For example, in New South Wales we have a primitive camping regulation, which theoretically should make it quite easy. "But what actually ends up happening on the ground is that if you've got a particular council or even just a particular council officer who doesn't like the idea of this, that can make life quite difficult for the landholders."

The **New South Wales Business Chamber** has previously raised concerns that start-ups like Youcamp are operating on an uneven playing field. Mr Woodford rejects suggestions that the model will hurt established caravan parks and tourist areas.

"I don't think that is the case. In my view, if you were to go right now to any of the actual public camping grounds or van parks, they are at absolute capacity," he said. "No matter where they staying they're still bringing money into these local economies."

Mr Woodford said the number one goal was to "get the regulations to catch up with what people are doing". "The inescapable reality is that people are starting to vote with their feet," he said.

"In the same way that you know you can't put your fingers in your ears and close your eyes and pretend that there's no such thing as Uber or Airbnb, you also can't pretend that people don't want a really great camping experience."

Wouldn't this be great for independent travellers? Is this a great sharing economy innovation? Have your say.

Source: [ABC Rural](#)

Sourced by [Mike Barrow](#)





### Leave a Reply

Name

Email Address

Website

**Submit Comment**

**Breaking News: Expanding the working holiday visa programme**  
by Mike Barrow | posted on July 14, 2015

**Budget screws backpackers yet again, tax free threshold is axed**  
by Chris Harrison | posted on May 12, 2015

**Guest Post: Backpacker tax changes to hurt tourism and farming**  
by Chris Harrison | posted on May 20, 2015

**Latest Backpacker stats from Tourism Research Australia**  
by Mike Barrow | posted on August 5, 2015

**INTERVIEW & SCOOP: Wicked Travel and Indie Travel bite the dust**  
by Mike Barrow | posted on May 1, 2017



### Latest Comments

- Anthony** on [Local fears that new St Kilda hostel will turn area into 'trashy party town'](#)
- Greg** on [Local fears that new St Kilda hostel will turn area into 'trashy party town'](#)
- Greg A** on [Adventure Travel & Backpackers Expo is up For Sale / Seeking Offers](#)
- Dave** on [Adventure Travel & Backpackers Expo is up For Sale / Seeking Offers](#)
- M** on [INTERVIEW & SCOOP: Wicked Travel and Indie Travel bite the dust](#)
- Andrew Paltridge** on [Adventure Travel & Backpackers Expo is up For Sale / Seeking Offers](#)
- Leigh Kealton** on [Adventure Travel & Backpackers Expo is up For Sale / Seeking Offers](#)
- Suzi** on [Rotten state of fruit & vege picking is a direct result of the backpacker tax](#)

### Events

- The Secret Garden Gala SHHHHH.. Its a secret!**  
Date : June 22, 2017  
Location : SHHHHH.. Its a secret!
- Adventure Queensland Ball 2017**  
Date : September 01, 2017  
Location : Airlie Beach, Whitsundays
- WYSTC 2017 Montréal Canada**  
Date : September 26, 2017 - September 29, 2017  
Location : Palais des congrès in Montréal, Canada