

● ROPED IN

Having the climb of your life

After a \$1 million renovation and cutting through lots of red tape, Sydneysiders can now climb the mast of one of the last tall ships on the harbour.

David Warner bought the *Southern Swan* five years ago and after restoring it, he fought to allow people to climb the 15 metre-high mast.

"It's been 12 months of red tape battles, brick wall after brick wall," he said.

"There are so many restrictions and laws and people aren't willing to take the risk.

"Obviously we've had to fight those.

"It was only on Monday I got the full declaration from the insurance company that we will cover you to let people go up the mast."

Previously, only qualified crew had been able to climb.

Passengers who scamper up the mast are equipped with a safety harness.

The *Southern Swan* was built in 1922 and was used to carry grain between Denmark and Greenland.

It arrived in Australia in 1988 to be part of the Bicentennial Re-enactment Fleet and has been docked in Campbell's Cove, The Rocks, ever since.

— RENATA GORTAN



Avast there, me hearties, a chance to experience the high seas.

Picture: CHRIS PAVLICH

● PR STUDY

Hard-sell lost on Aussies

Cathy Morris

The hard-sell and knocking your competitors might work in America but it won't win over Aussies, an expert says.

While Americans might like to believe anyone can "make it" if they work hard enough, Aussies have more of a soft spot for the underdog.

Public relations is one of the fastest growing industries in Australia, but had been dominated by US-based approaches, University of Technology Sydney professor Jim Macnamara said.

He analysed 14 PR textbooks before writing his book *Public Relations: Theories, Practices, Critiques*, out this week.

While it is often derided as spin, Macnamara said public relations is simply public communication by organisations.

However what works in one country may be not be successful in another.

"American PR is more hyped than Australian culture," he said.

"We like a more down to earth approach, we like a fair go and we like to look after the underdog."

Macnamara said the US approach could also be seen as offensive in Asia.

"American society is more individualistic, whereas Asian society is about collaboration," he said.

Macnamara said Australia also had a "youth culture" while Asia valued respect for elders.

Macnamara said there were about 15,000 to 17,000 PR professionals in Australia, a number that is growing by about 10 per cent a year.