



Welcome back...

to the first edition of the week for **BEN** after the Easter break.



I hope the Easter bunny was good to you, she/he certainly was at the **Travel Daily** office.

We all love a good deal and the Jumeirah Group has a beauty.

The luxury group's first European resort, Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel & Spa in Mallorca, Spain, which opens 24 April, is offering a deal that starts from €213 per room per night - and the 2nd night you get with their compliments.

Valid from 24 April - 8 May, stays also include prevailing taxes and breakfast in Es Fanel. - jpreservations@jumeirah.com.

Voyages winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Divya Hemnani, Forum Group Events in Petersham NSW for being the lucky winner of last month's *Business Events News* monthly competition courtesy of Voyages.

Hemnani has won two return economy airfares to Ayers Rock Resort, return airport transfers, two nights accom in a newly refurbished room at Sails in the Desert Hotel, dinner at the Tali Wiru fine dining experience and a Desert Awakenings Small Group Sunrise tour.

She won the monthly prize for her creative response to what Uluru means to her:

Magical monolith, Breathtaking beauty, Dreamtime serenity, Stars that hug you like a blanket, Making you never want to look away, Respect for Indigenous Australia.

BEN is again this month giving its readers the chance to win another great trip, this time to Hawaii courtesy of Hawaii Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines and The Kahala Hotel and Resort.

See **page 2** for today's question.

Phuket gets ready for Amway

15,000 incentive winners from Amway China are about to converge on Thailand's integrated resort, Laguna Phuket, and when they do, it will be the largest corporate gathering to ever visit this island resort complex.

The delegates from the direct sales company's annual leadership seminar will arrive and depart in waves throughout the four week event and will attend a rolling program of dinners, business sessions, and sightseeing.

600 plus are expected to arrive daily from 15 April until 15 May and depart four days later.

Once the program is underway there will be around 1,800 Amway China delegates and staff each day at the resort.

There will be 21 gala buffet dinners each hosting around 750 delegates at the central Laguna Grove venue, overlooking one of the resort's tropical lagoons, where entertainment will be staged on a floating platform.

Catering for the gala dinners will be shared by resort properties under the direction of Chinese chefs, with entertainment provided by Chinese artists.

The former Sheraton Grande which reopened last December as Angsana Laguna Phuket after a \$US35 million refurb, is one of the resort hotels where participants will stay.

Others are Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket and Laguna Beach Resort while support staff and contractors will be at Best Western Allamanda Laguna Phuket.

Managed by Banyan Tree



Group, the Angsana's GM Jerry John who was in Sydney last week together with Banyan Tree Phuket DSM, Adrian Croft and Banyan Tree Bangkok Asst. DSM, Wanida Suparp said, "The hotel has a brand new look for the Angsana brand and we have reduced the rooms inventory to 414.

"Now it's more hip and in line with the hotel brand that is designed to create and deliver a vibrant enlivening experience for guests."

During the mega incentive, the Banyan Tree Phuket which is moving to reposition the luxury resort into three individual Banyan Tree hotels, will play host to Amway's VIPs and to the many private functions.

To ensure the incentive runs smoothly, a reported 200-300 Mandarin-speaking students have been engaged to help during the event, with dry-runs for staff beginning this week.

Based on the economic impact Amway's incentive brought to Sydney last year, some 12 billion baht is expected to pour into Phuket's coffers.

Then in October, Club Clipsal from Australia will hold their annual incentive at Laguna Phuket with a five day, resort buyout of Laguna Phuket with between 500-800 pax expected.

Pictured at Sake in The Rocks, Sydney from left are: Jerry John, Victoria Hobbs, Wanida Suparp & Adrian Croft.

Tassie visitor growth

A **RECENTLY** released Tasmania Visitors Survey for the year ending Dec 2011 indicates good growth in conference & convention visitor arrivals to Tasmania.

Business Events Tasmania ceo Stuart Nettlefold said that the 9% increase in these visitors was evidence of the increased interest and demand that this sector is experiencing.

Increases through other parts of the year included a 15% increase in the April to June period compared to the same period in 2010.

"Tasmania can deliver excellent venues for all types of business events, from 20 to 1100 participants - it is a destination that we know exceeds expectations," said Nettlefold.

THE LUCKY ONE

In celebration of the yet to be released movie *The Lucky One*, Warner Bros. Pictures, Village Roadshow



Pictures and **Business Events News** are giving readers the chance to win a double pass to the movie!

The Lucky One, starring teen heart throb Zac Efron, Taylor Schilling and Blythe Danner, is based on the bestselling Nicholas Sparks novel which tells the story of a man whose brush with death leads him to the love of his life.

For your chance to win, be the first to answer the question to - comp@businesseventsnews.com.au

What is the name of the character Zac Efron plays in the movie?

Check the Classification





business events news

11th April 2012



crumbs!

HOLD the mayo!

Airport security screeners at New York's Kennedy Airport caught a Mexican man trying to smuggle a knife plunged in a jar of mayonnaise.

A loser on all counts, it turns out his hiding place was a no no as jars of mayonnaise are a banned item for carry-on luggage in the US.

The condiment and the knife were both confiscated and remarkably the man was allowed to board the plane.

AN "indepth & unbiased" April Fools survey by Positively Wellington Tourism, declared 'research' has revealed Wellington is the Capital of Absolutely Positively Everything. We can but agree!

Christchurch reviews

WITH the new Christchurch Convention Centre not due for completion until 2017, the Christchurch & Canterbury Convention Bureau's (CCCB) business development rep in Australia Jan Whiteside, is to finish her current contract at the end of June.

The need for a dedicated Australian rep will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The CCCB's chief executive Tim Hunter said the changes reflect current market conditions.

"Many national organisations are still open to convening meetings and small conferences in Christchurch and are more flexible in the range of accommodation options they will consider," he said.

Bureau manager, Caroline Blanchfield says that when the city rebuilds the conference business will be ready and willing to return.

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Singapore builds on tourism

THE budget terminal at Singapore's Changi Airport is to close on 25 September to make way for the construction of a new Terminal 4 building.

Airport management said the new terminal building will enable capacity of up to 16 million passengers a year, compared to the 4.6 million passengers processed through the existing budget terminal last year.

The existing facility is also unable to accommodate wider-body aircraft such as the A330, which many more low-cost airlines have begun using in recent years to fly mid-haul routes.

T4 will mark a shift away from the Budget Terminal's no-frills, down-market image with construction set to start next year and due for completion by 2017.

New work is also due to commence on the Park Royal Hotel on Singapore's Beach Road, as it undergoes a renovation to its function room facilities between May 2012 and March 2013.

In the meantime, the adjacent Furniture Mall Building is to be converted into a state-of-the-art meeting facility, comprising two ballrooms and three smaller meeting rooms.

The scope of work includes the partial demolition of the Furniture Mall building and the removal of the internal floors, but the overall building structure will be maintained.

The swimming pool will be closed from May to December 2012, but guests can transfer on the shuttle bus to use the swimming pool at the Park Royal on Kitchener Road.

Pictured are some of the many skyscrapers in Singapore.



Singapore's striking skyscraper skyline

Ayana's major upgrade

A renovation to Ayana Resort and Spa Bali's more than 200 hotel rooms and suites has resulted in a major upgrade to guest comfort, amenities and experience.

All categories of rooms have been refurbished, from standard through to ocean suites, and include the privileged Club Floor.

"The result of this renovation is both luxurious and inviting, each room providing a personal sanctuary for guests to enjoy their event in the highest level of comfort and discreet, thoughtful service," said Clive Edwards, rooms executive.

"In addition, we have upgraded the benefits for guests staying on the Club Floor with a refurb of the Club Lounge, relaunch of the dinner menu and a new Club Connections experience."



WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO HAWAII



During April and May, **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance a win an amazing holiday for two people to Hawaii, courtesy of **Hawaii Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines** and **The Kahala Hotel and Resort**.

The prize includes Hawaiian Airlines return airfares from Sydney to Honolulu, and five nights accommodation in an Ocean View Room at The Kahala Hotel and Resort.

Over 6 weeks, we will feature a different question in every **Business Events News** issue. There will be 15 questions in total, which will also be posted on our website. At the end of the month the subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this fantastic holiday to Hawaii.



Hawaii successfully hosted 20 leaders and 20,000 Asia-Pacific delegates during which economic leaders week in November 2011?

Hint! Visit www.businessaloha.com

Email your answers to: hawaii@businesseventsnews.com.au

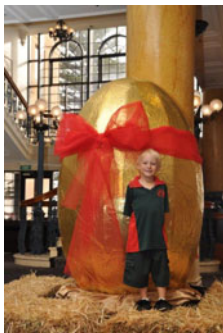
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In Profile - Paul Brown

THE director of F&B at Stamford Grand Adelaide, Glenelg Beach, Paul Brown may have created what is considered to be the biggest chocolate egg in Australia at 60 kilos and at 2.2m in height, this Easter, but when it comes to big things, he takes them in his stride.



Brown has worked for the King of Bahrain (His Majesty, King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa) overseeing his many palace kitchens, private jets, yacht and cruisers and taking full control of all the hotels where he stayed.

"I've prepared a banquet for 500 people attended by just two kings and served by up to 1000 security people, 50 drivers and 500 protocol staff," he said.

Brown has also cooked for most of the British Royal Family, royalty from Jordan, Monaco, Egypt, Greece, Swaziland, Spain and the Czech Republic, Prime Ministers, and celebrities too numerous to mention.

He also became the first Australian to be admitted to the elite club CCC - "Club des chef des chef".

Paul says his key to success has been: "To inspire the imagination and bring a point of difference".

Pictured above is the infamous 60kg chocolate egg, created by 'Mr. Big' Paul Brown just in time for Easter.

Hiebl to head AACB

ANDREW Hiebl with an extensive business event industry experience has been announced as executive director, Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) from 30 April.

Most recently Hiebl held the position of convention bureau manager, Business Events Geelong and chairperson of Business Events Victoria.

The role focuses on fuelling industry-wide collaboration for the mutual benefit of the 17 city and regional convention bureau members across Australia.

AACB president Damien Kitto said "Andrew's innovative thinking, savvy marketing and partnership strategies, and passionate advocacy are recognised by his peers.

Hiebl takes the reins from Mike Cannon who worked at the AACB for 11 years.

Earlier this year Mike decided to take on a new career challenge.

"While sad to see him leave, we wish him every success in his new endeavour," Kitto said.

Hiebl said, "I'm honoured to be joining AACB.

"Mike and I share similar views that the success of our industry requires a collaborative approach to enhancing Australia's business event offering.

"This is something I will champion in my role as executive director."

Hiebl will be based in Melbourne and operate out of the Melbourne Convention & Visitor Bureau.



Sitting Pretty

Welcome to *Sitting Pretty*, our regular review of experiences up the front of the plane.

Virgin Australia
Sydney-Los Angeles route

VIRGIN Australia flies 777-300 aircraft across the Pacific, configured with three cabins: Economy, Premium Economy and Business. Business Events News recently experienced the business class cabin between Sydney and Los Angeles and return.

The aircraft

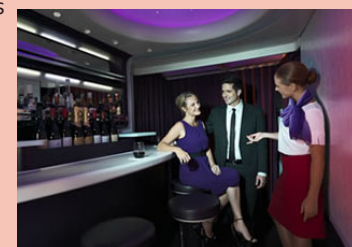
Virgin Australia's 777s are modern, efficient aircraft which provide the latest in technology and safety. They make the flight between Australia and the USA in around 14 hours.



The cabin

The business class cabin is configured with five rows of lie-flat seats (35 in total) in a 2-3-2 configuration. There's plenty of room to move about, and business class passengers have access to three bathrooms, including Virgin Australia's signature "Ladies Only" loo.

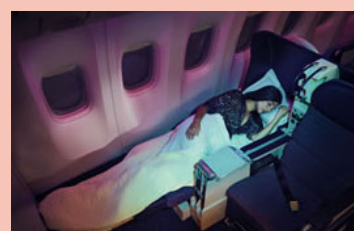
The cabin isn't noisy, although **BEN's** recent flight was in row 5, just adjacent to the in-flight bar (pictured) for business class passengers where a number of sociable types passed the time away in conversation, making the Virgin-provided noise-cancelling headsets quite useful.



Service

Staff on board **BEN's** flight were friendly and knowledgeable. Flight attendants explained the service and meal options and regularly asked if anything additional was needed. Business class passengers are provided with optional pyjamas which are great to slip into particularly on the late night return flight from the USA, and mens' and ladies' amenities kits include a range of toiletries plus earplugs, socks and a very comfortable eye shade.

The seat



Virgin Australia's business class seat is 1.88m long and extends into a lie-flat bed, which is very comfortable once the cabin crew make it up with a cosy seat cover, foot extension and doona. The seat has a universal power point and a 31cm inflight entertainment screen in the arm which folds out once the plane is cruising. Inflight entertainment on the very responsive touch-screen system includes a comprehensive range of new and old favourite movies along with TV shows, music and games. Seats have a privacy screen, a USB slot and a reading light and adjust to a range of positions so it's easy to get comfy. There's also a massage feature which can be activated from the simple controller.

Food and Beverage

Virgin Australia offers a menu designed by Sydney-based celebrity chef Luke Mangan. On **BEN's** flight there was a range of tasty choices and each menu selection is paired with a matching fine wine choice. As well as set mealtimes business class passengers can select from a range of snacks and other beverages at any time.

At the airport

Business class guests enjoy priority check-in as well as lounge access. In Sydney, Virgin Australia uses the Air New Zealand lounge, while in Los Angeles a temporary facility in Terminal 3 is currently in use. Formerly the Alaskan Airlines lounge, this offers a range of free drinks and snacks but no internet access at present.

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