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Boo to you!

WE'VE fallen in love with Boo, Virgin America's new Pet liaison (**BEN** Fri).



Cute as a button, he has his own blog and five million Facebook fans!

MEANWHILE, a new travel translation app has been created for travellers wanting to find their way when travelling abroad or so they don't order snails by mistake.

It's called WordLens, and uses a smartphone's inbuilt camera to recognise text and translates it to English.

The app allows the user to make sense of simple road signs or restaurant menus in real time. Have a great week! - Jill

Finance/Insurance tops incentives

AN annual analysis and forecast for the motivational events industry – The Site Index - conducted by the US based Site International Foundation; found that the segment most using motivational travel programs in 2011, was the financial services/ insurance sector.

All registrants from the 90 member countries in The Site Index database were invited to participate in the survey, of which 106 responded over 16 countries.

Only five of the 96 responding incentive planners/providers reported serving a single industry segment.

63% said that no more than half of their business came from one segment.

This indicated that the majority of incentive planner/provider companies are relatively well diversified.

Next after financial services was high tech/telecommunications at 25% and pharmaceuticals at 12%.

These were followed by food and beverage, health care and automotive.

44% of the respondents believed that future changes in the mix of sectors with which they do business will be market-driven while 28% felt they will be internally driven.

Only 12% expect no change in the sectors with which they do business.

20% said that the financial services sector would account for the majority of their business in the future while 13% identified technology as their future source of motivational travel business.

Defining Excellence

THE 2012 National Tourism & Events Excellence Conference, themed *Defining Excellence*, is to be held in Victoria from 16 –17 July at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Keynote speakers include: Taleb Rifai, secretary general of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation; Russel Howcroft - ABC TV's Gruen Transfer panellist and ceo, Y&R Brands Australia & New Zealand; John Harnden - ceo, ICC Cricket World Cup 2015; Dimitrios Buhalis - president, International Federation for Information Technologies in Travel and Tourism (IFITT) and Greg Moore - president and ceo, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy US.

Presentations will also be heard from the Hon. Louise Asher MP, Minister for Tourism and Major Events and the Hon. Bob Baldwin, Shadow Minister for Tourism and Regional Development.

Hosting the event will be Nick Bryant, BBC World News Correspondent.



Central Coast coup

AUSTRALIA's most famous piece of silverware, the Melbourne Cup, is scheduled to arrive on the NSW Central Coast, on Friday 7 September, one of the destinations selected to be included in the 10th Anniversary Emirates Melbourne Cup Tour.

Valued at \$175,000, 'The Cup' will tour the area engaging with the local community, and be the catalyst for fund raising for the local not-for-profit charity, Camp Breakaway, to finance items on their wishlist.

The Central Coast is one of just 26 destinations in 'The Cup's' tour leading up to the 152nd running of the Emirates Melbourne Cup to

take place on Tuesday, 6 November.

'The Cup' will tour the iconic Norah Head Lighthouse at sunrise and visit local schools, aged care facilities and Wyong Hospital to encourage the community to share and/or create memories of 'The Cup' and for the first time in the history of the Wyong Gold Cup, people wanting to glimpse 'The Cup' will be able to enter the course free of charge.



Australian Business Expo

THE Australian Business Events Expo being held at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre on 15-16 August is encouraging meetings and events organisers not to miss this event (see the special first page of **BEN** today).

The two day event showcases how organisers can plan, compare and buy everything they need to stage their next business event in Australia.

To register to attend see the website at abeexpo.com.au.



World of Accor Sydney 2012

Sofitel Sydney Wentworth Thursday 02 August 2012. Business Event Session

Meet with a selection of Accor's world class meeting and conference hotels.

Join Sunrise co-host Melissa Doyle at the conclusion of appointments for a delicious lunch, accompanied by a superb array of Robert Oatley wines. There are great prizes to be won on the day including a new Peugeot 207 CC*

Session time 9:30am - 12 noon Appointments are limited, so [click here to register now!](#)

*For full terms & conditions go to <http://media.userver.com.au/accor/expo/2012/index.html> Open to Australian residents over 18 years of age. Promotion starts at 09:31am 02/08/12 and closes at 7pm on 02/08/12. The 'lucky key event' will take place at 7:20pm at Level 3, 61-101 Phillip St. Sydney NSW 2000. Prizewinner's name will be published in The Australian on 9/08/12. Promoter is AAPC Limited (ABN 87 009 175 820) of Level 30, 123 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Authorised under Permits: NSW LTPS/12/04903.



business events news

16th July 2012



crumbs!

DANGEROUS travel guru Robert Young Pleton who said that "people can and should travel wherever they want to, regardless of warnings," now muses that the world is running out of dangerous places, saying "there aren't wars any more."

Acknowledging, the need to be aware, he says that 'don't go there' or 'watch out', are "totally different from 'be careful not to get hit by any of the mortars being launched by warlords who are besieging town today.'"

India Grand Prix

MAKING its second appearance on the F1 calendar, the 2012 Formula 1 Airtel India Grand Prix is sure to provide a memorable race-going experience.

One of the biggest sporting events on the International Grand Prix calendar and the Buddh International race track, it has been designed as one of the fastest, most exciting circuits in the world.

Qualifying starts 26 October with race day 28 October.

TCI has full-hosted eight day packages with accommodation stand passes, in addition to post race touring packages.

To book call Unique Tourism Collection on 02 9211 6590.

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Creating a Mirage



STAGE one of a \$26 million refurbishment to the Sheraton Mirage Gold Coast, finalised ahead of schedule at the end of April and an additional \$6 million spent in stage two, to upgrade meeting venues and selected resort areas completed, has seen the iconic resort hotel undergo a complete transformation.

Incorporating all 293 rooms and suites, accommodation corridors, lobby, reception desk, guest lifts, Porte Cochere, pool furnishings, Link@Sheraton, Terraces restaurant and Pearls bar, the refurbishment has transformed the outdoor poolside venue into a tropical oasis.

With its direct beach access, the outdoor venue is suitable for up to 400 delegates in a banquet setting complete with stage, barbeques and buffets.

The transformation of the conference venues features environmentally beneficial technology, gleaming new high traffic paths, neutral coloured wall surfaces drawing on a mocha and pearl colour palette, accenting the vast space, high acoustic ceilings and dramatic lighting effects.

Together with the latest in audio and visual technology, digital signage and with easy access for large equipment or vehicles, the overall result is to ensure any event, product launch, gala dinner or conference held at the resort is memorable for all the right reasons.

Finishing touches to the project works include updated street frontage and water features, lavastone driveways, attractive new signage and exterior building decorative features.

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MCVB restructures

IN line with the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), new Strategic Business Plan and commitment to improve their stakeholder engagement, the ceo of the MCVB, Karen Bolinger has announced a restructure of the former marketing and communications department, and the business development and convention sales department.

Operating under a new title of *Commercial Partnerships*, Bolinger said, "The new Commercial Partnerships department will be responsible for marketing, communications, strategic alliances, membership, the Melbourne Meetings + Events Service (MM+ES) and events, including the Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME)."

Together with the restructure, Edwina San, formerly MCVB's director International Incentives will become general manager Commercial Partnerships and will head the new department, and Jon Malpas,



formerly MCVB's senior manager events and marketing services, will report to San in the position of associate director Partnerships and Events.

In addition, Rebecca Elliott, MCVB's communications manager, will take over the management of marketing, in addition to communications, while in the business development and convention sales department, Julia Swanson has been promoted to general manager business development and bidding.

And, in line with the new Strategic Business Plan this department will now include a dedicated research team headed up by Danielle Ramirez as associate director research.

On the couch with MEA

THE Dockside Group is to sponsor a Y MEA event (aged 30yrs and under) titled *On the couch with*

It will take place on Wednesday, 18 July at Dockside, balcony level, Cocklebay Wharf, 6pm – 8pm.

Described as an intimate insight into the professional lives of some industry suppliers, the event will present a panel of experts.

An insight into operating a varied portfolio of venues will be made by the Dockside Group; while an Event Case Study: Luminous at Darling Quarter, will be presented by AVI and Moreton Hire with the topic: The transformation of environments from intimate cocktail parties to international sporting events.

Attendance is complimentary for MEA members, while for non-members it costs \$40.

Email: events@mea.org.au.

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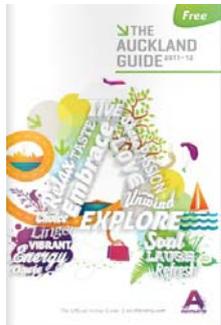
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New Auckland Guide



A new partnership agreement for a new-look Auckland Visitor Guide has been formed by the Auckland

Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) and McLaren Brown Publishing.

To be launched in September, the new publishing joint venture will see the current Auckland Guide discontinued and the existing Auckland A-Z guide undergoing significant changes.

The official guide's revised format will include new destination elements, according to Jason Hill, acting general manager Destination, ATEED.

"There are already a number of Auckland visitor guides in the market, which adds extra expenditure for tourism operators trying to list in them all.

"By removing a guide from the market, tourism operators can save on advertising expenditure and the money saved by ATEED from not publishing our own version can be reallocated on marketing to bring more people to Auckland," says Hill.

ATEED will liaise on layout and oversee destination editorial content in the new Auckland A-Z guide, which will increase its current print run to over half a million and include the development of an official Chinese edition.

Quality recognised

THE 4-star Quality Inn Apollo International, recently redeveloped and extended has been recognised as a leader in business excellence in two local business awards programs, the Hunter Business Awards presented by the Hunter Business Chamber and the Lake Macquarie City 2012 Business Excellence Awards.

The Hunter Business Awards are renowned as the most prestigious Regional Business Awards.

The Apollo International is also a finalist in the Customer Service category.

The Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards celebrates businesses within the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area.

In this, the Apollo is a finalist in two categories; Excellence in Customer Service (by a Whole Business) and Excellence in Workforce Training and Development.

The Apollo is committed to workforce training and development with a positive staff culture and enacting business and customer service programs.



Get your teeth into this

THE FDI World Dental Congress, being held from 29 August – 1 September, has chosen Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) as the venue of its 100th anniversary event.

With an expected 10,000 dental practitioners from all around the world attending the congress, issues and requirements relating to oral health are to be addressed.

FDI is the principal representative body for more than one million dentists worldwide, formed by a federation of approximately 200 national dental associations and specialist groups.

The HKCEC expressed their pride in having been named as the site of this special occasion by such a prestigious organisation.

The FDI notes on its website that it considers itself "fortunate to be hosted by HKCEC" and in particular mentions the city-centre location of the venue and spectacular harbour view.



Abu Dhabi's popularity

WITH Australia currently ranked 16th top source market for hotel guests in Abu Dhabi, a series of industry roadshows were held in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi).

Updating the Australian trade and MICE industry on the increasing popularity of Abu Dhabi, 360 guests across the three day promotion heard about the growing number of hotels, tourist attractions and entertainment options available.

Representatives from TCA Abu Dhabi Australia presented on the different attractions available including tailored tours, new hotels and popular areas such as Al Ain and Al Gharbia.

Partner airline, Etihad Airways, talked of the flight options available between Australia and Abu Dhabi, as well as showcasing the prestigious Diamond Class flight experience.

Eight of Abu Dhabi's key destination stakeholders were also present including; Arabian Adventures, Kurban Tours, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, Hala Abu Dhabi, Etihad Holidays, Emirates Palace, Virgin Australia and TDIC.

WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates **Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa** in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.13: How many swimming pools are there at Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

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

[Click here for terms & conditions](#)



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