



## Happy sunny day

AFTER this week's Sydney rain, it seems remarkable to say -

happy sunny Friday.; one of the wags in the office described the weather rather aptly as bipolar.

WHILE not meaning to appear ungrateful for the rather special gifts we receive on famils and at trade shows, I'm compiling a good gift/bad gift list.

I'd love to hear from you, dear reader, what wonderful and plain awful gifts have you received and what do you think is appropriate. Jill



## Meetings Africa 2012 a smash hit



SHATTERING formal meetings and attendance records, Meetings Africa 2012 which closed last night, has been hailed as an undoubted success for the South African travel and business tourism industry.

South Africa's premier business tourism exhibition, held from 6-8 March in the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, reports that overall attendance (at 3452) was 20% up on 2011 (2637), with registered international visitor numbers nearly doubling from 106 in 2011 to 205 in 2012 (up 93%).

A major success is the 8906 Meetings that were requested during the three-day show through a match-making electronic diary system, giving real substance to the show's usefulness as a business-enabling and revenue-generating environment.

Notable too was a heightened interest from emerging markets, with a lively BRIC panel discussion on the potential and interest in South Africa from China, India, Brazil and Russia.

There were 68% more foreign journalists this year (37 in 2012

compared to 22 in 2011).

"There is no doubt looking at the numbers that this has been the most successful Meetings Africa show yet," said South African Tourism chief executive officer, Thulani Nzima.

"It shows that there is keen interest in destination South Africa and bodes extremely well for our plans to grow business tourist arrivals, entrench our status as Africa's leading business tourism destination and increase our share OF the global business tourism market."

James Costello, a hosted buyer from Atlanta in the United States was visiting South Africa for the first time.

"It's chin-droppingly beautiful," he said, "and every single one of my expectations has been exceeded."

## Movie pass winners

CONGRATULATIONS to Melinda Brown, AFTA for being the second winner of a double pass to a film of choice at the Alliance Francaise French Film Festival.

The last question and chance to win a double pass to the French Film Festival courtesy of Sofitel is being offered today so be the first in to the answer the question.

MEANWHILE the Australian Film Festival has awarded double passes to Mark Gamble who is off to see *Number 96* on Tue 13 Mar; Micaela Lozina from Holiday Specialists who will take a partner to *LBF* on 14 Mar; Claudia Vidor, Sun Island Tours will see Jack Mccoy's 'Surfing Masterpiece' - *A Deeper Shade of Blue* and Tina Evans, Qantas will be on the edge of her seat watching *Redd Inc* on the closing night.

## NSW's blockbuster

WITH the support of the NSW government through Destination NSW, Sydney is to get the blockbuster *Alexander the Great: 2000 Years of Treasures* exhibition.

Secured exclusively for the Australian Museum from Nov, the exhibition is the largest collection from the acclaimed State Hermitage Museum of St Petersburg ever to tour Australia.

## WIN TICKETS TO THE ALLIANCE FRANCAISE FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

SOFITEL  
LUXURY HOTELS

This week, **Business Events News** is giving readers the chance to win one of three

double passes to the Alliance Francaise French Film Festival, courtesy of **Sofitel Luxury Hotels**. This fantastic prize includes a double pass to any film during the Festival at a choice of cinemas across Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane, Perth or Adelaide.

To win, simply be the first to answer the question, every publication day this week to - [comp@businessesnews.com.au](mailto:comp@businessesnews.com.au)

**Finish this sentence:**

**Sofitel offers luxury hotels with first class facilities for meetings, events and ...**



## Christchurch emerging

ACCORDING to a writer for the Lonely Planet guide, Christchurch is re-emerging as one of NZ's most exciting and hip cities.

As the city's rebuild continues, the humble shipping container has become a new funky option in its retail and hospitality sectors.

## Ben's Top Jobs

### Event Coordinator

- ▶ Salary from \$50K + super
- ▶ Sydney CBD location
- ▶ Corporate, team building and incentive programs

### PA/Office Manager

- ▶ Salary from \$65K + super
- ▶ Sydney CBD location
- ▶ MD diary management, admin ops & event registration

For more details call or email [ben@inplacerecruitment.com.au](mailto:ben@inplacerecruitment.com.au).



Ben Carnegie



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Staging Connections appointments

STAGING Connections has appointed three key senior managers.

Tim Chapman joins as digital business development manager.



A newly created role, it reflects the growth of Staging Connections into the digital arena and the ever changing role technology plays in event experiences.

Fiona Pascoe, a well known industry identity who has worked for some of the world's leading firms in hospitality, tourism and events, joins as general manager sales, a role that emphasises Staging Connections' plan to improve internal processes, increasing efficiencies and continue delivering superior results.

And new recruit Liz Clarke has joined the company as marketing manager in a bid to streamline communications activities and to oversee the day to day management of the marketing team & manage Staging Connection's relationship with external marketing partners, Zadro Communications.



Flying high with EY



THE Sofitel Wentworth's ballroom was festooned in glorious blooms; Paulini, elegantly dressed in flaming red sang as though she was channelling Whitney Houston; and a plentiful supply of food and drink kept 400 industry guests in high spirits, when they joined Etihad's CEO James Hogan to celebrate the 5th anniversary of Etihad flights out of Australia.

Hogan, who expressed delight at being named the world's leading airline for three years in a row, said the carrier now operates 40 flights in conjunction with Virgin Australia to the UAE capital, connecting to over 84 destinations worldwide.

He went on to say that Etihad had uplifted 1.7 million people to Australian from Abu Dhabi in 2011 and more than eight million worldwide, thanks to their partnership with Virgin.

With 66 aircraft and 100 more expected over the next seven years, he spoke of the introduction of Etihad's own airport lounge at Sydney Airport, in conjunction with Virgin.

"Wait till you see it," he enthused.

"In comparison to other airport lounges, "you ain't seen nothing yet!"

Pictured above from left are: Ken Morton, director Comms Asia-Pacific Boeing; Sandra Chipchase, CEO Destination NSW and Boeing's Caroline Bell.

NT scoops the awards pool

A NUMBER of awards specific to the business tourism sector were won when the Northern Territory scooped 10 awards at the recent 2012 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards in Cairns.

NT winners are spread across the Territory and include operators in Alice Springs, Kings Canyon, and Kakadu.

Among the winners were the Alice Springs School of the Air (Tourist Attraction Silver Award).

Lasseters Hotel Casino in Alice Springs, currently undergoing a \$35 million development, collected the Bronze Tourism Award for Deluxe Accommodation.

Kings Canyon Wilderness Lodge won silver in the category of Unique Accommodation.

Wildman Wilderness Lodge was the winner of a Bronze Award as a New Tourism Development.

In the Top End, the indigenous-owned company Yellow Water Cruises won the

Major Tour and Transport Operator Silver Award.

Arnhem Land-focused 4WD safari operator, Venture North, won a Bronze Award in the Heritage and Cultural Tourism category.

Scott Lovett, director of business tourism for the Northern Territory Convention Bureau, clarified why he thought the Northern Territory was doing so well on the national stage.

"The word 'unique' is so overdone nowadays but it truly applies to many of the NT products and experiences.

"Feed-back from event planners tells us that the appeal of the NT is so strong that it has a very positive influence on attendance at events held in the Territory.

"These Tourism Award winners are part of the reason why that happens," he said.



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# business events news

9th March 2012



## crumbs!

ACCORDING to a recent survey conducted by daily deal website Living Social and Mandala Research, Americans are the worst travellers.

And, it isn't just the rest of the world that sees them in that light, Americans feel the same way too!

The Irish called the British the worst while the British fingered the Germans.

Perhaps one of the main reasons why Americans polled so low may be because they get so few annual holidays.

In contrast, Canadians had an average of 21 days, the British 23 days while Australia's average of 27 days off was topped only by the Irish with 28 days.

## Ghostly tours

ADULTS-only ghost tours of the historic homestead of Gledswood, add an interesting string to the Macarthur region's group activity bow.

Run by The Crystal Shop in nearby Camden and led by "psychic medium" Joanne Gulson, the 90-minute torchlight tour of the rambling, 183-year-old homestead and its dark cellars will run every Friday night from 8pm - finishing with a light supper at Gledswood's old cellar door to help brave, ghost-busting souls calm their nerves.

Built in 1829, in 64 hectares of rolling Macarthur countryside, Gledswood Homestead boasts magnificent colonial buildings, lush gardens and its own winery and cellar door.

For bookings and info visit - [thecrystalshop.com.au](http://thecrystalshop.com.au).

# MEETINGS 2012 goes to 'pod'

AN unprecedented number of small, independent businesses have reportedly expressed interest in taking part in New Zealand's MEETINGS 2012.

The annual event being held June 13 -14 at the SkyCity Convention Centre in Auckland is shaping up to be the most diverse showcase yet of New Zealand's business tourism sector, organisers say.

This year more than 170 exhibitors from throughout the country are expected to attend, while overseas buyers will be coming from as far afield as China and the United States.

"Each year MEETINGS seems to go from strength to strength and that's reflected in the increasing levels of interest we're getting from exhibitors and from buyers," says CINZ chief executive Alan Trotter.

To help independent exhibitors get a foot in the door organisers

have introduced a new stand concept - 'pods' for smaller exhibitors.

"We feel it is important that MEETINGS is accessible to everyone - no matter how big or small their business.

"Often it's small businesses who



are the hidden gems of our industry and we want to give them a cost-effective opportunity to promote themselves and to grow," Mr Trotter said.

Applications for hosted buyers wanting to attend MEETINGS close on April 6, 2012, and these can be made online now at [www.meetings.co.nz](http://www.meetings.co.nz)

Hosted buyers are offered complimentary air travel thanks to Air New Zealand.

## NSW Business Events give a job

NEW South Wales Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, has announced the injection of \$211 million from 59 business events into the state economy.

The booster shot, said to take place in Sydney between now and the end of the year will this month alone see \$40 million in economic value with nine international business events taking place in Sydney.

"About half of all business travellers to Australia come to NSW according to Tourism Research Australia (TRA)," he said.

"The NSW Government has set a target to double visitor expenditure by 2020 and a healthy business events sector will play a key role in helping us

to achieve this.

"The much needed Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct will provide a catalyst for a new level of collaboration focused on bringing new business, new people and new ideas to Australia's number one business events destination," Souris added.

Lyn Lewis Smith, CEO, Business Events Sydney (BESydney), said: "March is a bumper month in Sydney with events secured by BESydney set to generate millions of dollars in economic impact for New South Wales, but beyond this, there will be far reaching legacies for our city's businesses, professionals, education sector and community."

## WIN A 2-NIGHT ULURU ENCOUNTER



To celebrate the \$10million redevelopment of Ayers Rock Resort's Uluru Meeting Place conference centre **Voyages** is offering a great prize to **Business Events News** readers.

The Uluru Meeting Place will feature striking contemporary interiors that reflect the Indigenous heritage of the location. Facilities include a new ballroom that can comfortably seat 420 people as well as a second ballroom that seats over 300. These two rooms combined can create a large area that is ideal for events and trade shows.

The prize includes two return economy airfares to Ayers Rock Resort from the winners nearest Australian capital city, return airport transfers, two nights accommodation in a newly refurbished room at the Sails in the Desert Hotel, dinner at the intimate Tali Wiru fine dining experience and a Desert Awakenings Small Group Sunrise tour.

All you need to do to be in the running to win this great prize, is to email your answer to the below question by COB on Friday 30th March to: [voyagescomp@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:voyagescomp@businesseventsnews.com.au)

The most creative answer will win this fantastic prize.

**In 25 words or less tell us what Uluru means to you**



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