



## Love 'em

**THANKS** to all the people who responded to the silly questions people ask (BEN 11 Jan).



From this selection, it would appear that the Whitsunday's attracts their fair share!

Julie Ford, Hamilton Island's business tourism manager relates, "Can I walk to Whitehaven Beach from Hamilton Island?; What time is the 5pm aerobics class?; Is the kid's sandcastle building contest on the beach?; If we choose to stay during the cyclone evacuation will we be on TV- and still get room service?"

Regina White, sales and marketing manager, Ocean Hotels and Tourism, (Long Island Resort, Club Croc, Sunlover Reef Cruises) commented on these: "Can I drive to the Great Barrier Reef and how far is it? (Sure, hope your car has a snorkel); How do I get to Long Island Resort? (We suggest swimming)."

Suzanne (Suz) Baker, director EVENTIONZ Ltd NZ said "We had a guest from New York on a famil who looked up at the New Zealand night sky and asked, is that the same moon as in New York?"

While Maria, PA to Graeme Biddle, a caricaturist who draws at festivals around NSW said, "Graeme does these sittings at the very reduced price of \$35, as written on the sign we display.

"However, I am always astounded by the question occasionally asked afterwards, 'Do I get to keep the caricature?'" - Jill.

## One&Only prize

**DESTINATION** Marketing Services and Unique Venues is this week offering the ultimate prize of a three night stay in a luxurious Beach Front Terrace Junior Suite at One&Only Palmilla in Los Cabos, Mexico plus dinner for two at Aqua Restaurant.

Get your answers in for your chance to win this competition.

## GIBTM pitches new hybrid event

**FOR** the first time GIBTM, the Gulf Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition, has invited Event Camp to set up a hybrid event, Event Camp Middle East 2013, to share its global initiative and to inspire event professionals.

Event Camp travels the world from New York to Sydney and Bahrain to Dubai, to bring real life case studies, strategies for leveraging social media and new technologies to inspire audiences to discuss their insight and examples of what is working and 'what's coming next'.

Available to all GIBTM attendees, the new feature area allows visitors and buyers to learn and interact with likeminded professionals.



As well as gathering an audience at GIBTM, Event Camp will also provide an online live service for event professionals that are unable to make it to the event.

The Event Camp will take place on each day of the show and is available online for the rest of the year.

GIBTM is being held in Abu Dhabi, 25-27 March.

For more information visit - [www.gibtm.com](http://www.gibtm.com).

## It's all in the game

**LOOKS** like you may have come across not just a great deal but your next small incentive reward, at Sir Richard Branson's Kenyan Safari Camp.

In celebration of the summer opening of Virgin Limited Edition's Mahali Mzuri in Kenya is offering guests the opportunity to enjoy a free night when booking a stay during August.

Valid for reservations made before 28 February when confirming a 4 or 5 night stay.

This Branson resort, situated within the Motorogi Conservancy in the Maasai Mara ecosystem of Kenya, is about 240km due west of Nairobi.

It consists of 12 sleeper tents and can cater for a maximum of 24 guests at any one time.

Rates start from US\$590 per person per night (based on double occupancy) and are fully inclusive of all meals, drinks & daily game drives as well as unlimited access to the Olare Orok and Motorogi Conservancies.

To check it out visit - [www.mahalimzuri.virgin.com](http://www.mahalimzuri.virgin.com).

## MEA's free webinar

**MEETINGS & Events Australia (MEA)** is conducting a free webinar called *Speaking Up without Freaking Out: Tips to Delivering Business Presentations* on 24 January at 1 pm.

The complimentary one hour, live presentation will be led by Matt Abrahams, educator and coach at Stanford.

The interactive webinar will teach members 'how to create compelling and connected messages'; 'Anxiety management techniques to enable confidence' and 'the pitfalls that increase anxiety and reduce confidence'.

Interested parties unable to attend are encouraged to register as a recording can be sent to you - <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/837141662>.

## WIN a One&Only stay in Mexico



This week **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win three nights in a luxurious Beach Front Terrace Junior Suite at One&Only Palmilla in Los Cabos, Mexico including dinner for two at Aqua Restaurant courtesy of **DMS** and **Unique Venues**.

Set amidst swaying palms, One&Only Palmilla is an ideal location for every event from conferences, incentives to corporate retreats.



To enter, answer each question this week & submit your creative answer on Friday. Today's question is: **Name another One&Only resort in the Unique Venues Portfolio?**

Email: [comp@businessesnews.com.au](mailto:comp@businessesnews.com.au)  
 Hint: [uniquevenues.com.au](http://uniquevenues.com.au) Click here for terms and conditions



## Location, price & past experience

**WHEN** it comes to choosing a hotel, location is still the primary factor that determines hotel choice, according to Market Metrix who recently completed a study that looked at the reasons why people all around the world select a particular hotel or casino.

The results offer insight into current guest behavior, and suggest ways to appeal to them.

Location generally matters more to leisure guests and tends to be more important to older travelers (over 50 years old), with a high income (US\$100,001 – \$150,000), who prefer staying in an upper midscale or upscale hotel

“Price” and “Past Experience” are the next

most important factors, the importance of ‘Past Experience’ climbing over the past few years while emphasis given to ‘location’ and ‘price’ has remained constant.

Perhaps guests have become more demanding with the diversity of hotel choices available, especially at the higher end of the market.



## Market Metrix

Globally, ‘Past Experience’ (11.9%) plays a much bigger role in hotel selection than the influence of a friend’s recommendation (6.8%), the brand’s reputation (5.5%), the role of promotions (5.0%), the power of loyalty programs (3.8%) and the impact that online reviews have on hotel selection (2.9%).

## CWT launches online China application

**IN** an industry-first in this market, a mobile booking app called CWT Online



China, that enables China based business travellers to book domestic travel via their smartphone, has been launched by Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT).

Developed in recognition of the high demand for innovative products and tools to support travellers, it joins the already released international online booking tool, also called CWT Online specifically for the Chinese market in September.

The mobile booking app provides access to real time data and makes the booking process quick, easy and efficient. The launch further signifies CWT China’s commitment to continuous innovation and positions mobile solutions as an integral part of its offering.

In the near future there are plans to increase the functionality of the mobile app to include international bookings.

## Westin Denarau, Fiji to reopen in February

**IN** the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Evan comes the news that The Westin Denarau Island Resort & Spa in Fiji will reopen for business on 6 February.

Repairs to the substantially damaged property are now nearing completion, thanks to contractors who worked throughout the Christmas and New Year period to get the job finished.

Concurrent with the reopening of the hotel, The Westin Denarau Resort & Spa will also be launching a brand new restaurant, Steakhouse by Peter Kuruvita.

Having opened the award winning Flying Fish restaurant in Sydney in 2003, the internationally renowned chef and SBS TV presenter, joined the Starwood family in 2008 with the opening of Flying Fish Fiji at Sheraton Fiji Resort.



## The KEE resort reopens in Phuket

**THE** trendy, 4 star resort with a vast lagoon-like swimming pool and contemporary Sino-Portuguese theme, the KEE Resort & Spa has reopened in the heart of Patong.

The 244 guest room resort, with first class facilities for meeting and training events, offers a wide range of high-tech communication facilities in the multi-function KEE Grand Hall.

With a separate foyer and ideal for meetings, conferences and banquets of up to 180 guests, it has a total floor space of 200sqm.

## AIME’s exhibitor directory now live

**ASIA-PACIFIC** Incentives & Meetings Expo, only one month away from its 26 February opening date, has announced its Exhibitor Directory is now live.

Attendees can access exhibitor details and plan their time at AIME, in Melbourne through the Directory.

Exhibitors are encouraged to update their company profiles, logos and social media in order to take full advantage of this interactive web listing.

To access the Exhibitor Directory visit - <http://www.aime.com.au/en/Exhibitor-Directory/#>.



**P&O** gets a Wiggles on.

Shock, horror! A reliable source reports that the popular children’s group; the Wiggles ditched their big red car in favour of a big white ship so as to celebrate the launch of 2013 Australia Day, on Thursday.

Lured there by P&O Cruises big white Pacific Pearl, the onboard launch reflects P&O Cruises’ new role as official sponsor of the Australia Day Sydney Harbour program in 2013 and 2014.

What’s more, in celebration of the holiday, Pacific Pearl will be moored in Sydney Harbour for the entire day, with passengers enjoying a front row seat for all the festivities and fireworks.



**Pictured** above is P&O Cruises senior vice president, Tammy Marshall onboard Pacific Pearl with The Wiggles: Emma Watkins, Simon Pryce, Lachlan Gillespie and Anthony Field as well as MS Australia representatives Emma Giunti and Stephen Papadopoulos, promoting the inaugural MS Colour Run which forms part of the official Australia Day program.

## Wolgan’s Symphony

**EMIRATES** Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa has partnered with Sydney Symphony to host the inaugural chamber music weekend between 1-3 March.

The open air concert under the stars will feature brass and percussion musicians performing music from the French Baroque by Lully to excerpts from Bizet’s Opera Carmen.

Four intimate and unique concerts will be held from Friday evening to Sunday lunchtime.



# business events news

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## CONTACT US:

Publisher  
Bruce Piper  
Editor  
Jill Varley  
Contributors  
Chantel Housler

Advertising:  
[advertising@businessnews.com.au](mailto:advertising@businessnews.com.au)

P: 1300 799 220  
F: 1300 799 221

PO Box 1010 Epping, NSW, 1710

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## Palmer Motorama

A car museum has been added to Palmer Coolum Resort's 'must see' facilities, on the Sunshine Coast.

Some 30 vintage vehicles from resort owner Clive Palmer's personal collection will be displayed until 28 January, offering examples of both engineering and luxury motoring through the ages.

Rolls Royce devotees will be thrilled at what is in store, as will anyone who has dreamed of owning the power and panache of a 1954 Aston Martin.

The Palmer Motorama is open daily from 10 am to 7 pm at Warran Road, Coolum Beach.

The resort's next venture to open is a dinosaur park where Jeff the 8.5 metre tall Tyrannosaurus Rex will be joined by 160 lifelike prehistoric beasts.

## Hotel development to boom

**FIGURES** released by TOPHOTELPROJECTS, a worldwide leading provider of global b2b hotel data, reveals that 2,500 first class and luxury hotels with up to 540,000 rooms are expected to open their doors during 2013.

Unsurprisingly, most of these properties are located in China with 270 hotel openings.

Sizeable resorts are being developed in the USA: in Orlando/Florida the Palazzo del Lago, with a 2,200 room resort operated by InterContinental, opening in February.

Hilton Hotels will establish a resort with 2,900 rooms in Hawaii.

Raffles will inaugurate a resort on the Maldives Island Konottaa during spring with just 49 rooms.

At the Cap du Baie on Mauritius the Oberoi hotel group will open a resort with 80 suites and 85 luxury villas.



## Pretorius departs United Franchise Group

**AFTER 25** years, Brian Pretorius, United Franchise Group, (Sign A Rama, EmbroidMe & Plan Ahead Events) director operations and events has left the company to set up his own conference and events management group.



Pretorius says his experience of franchising, conference and event management and trade shows means he understands the importance of correctly planning and executing conference goals and outcomes for franchisors and their franchisees.

Pretorius is partnering with a number of event specialists to offer a full conference and exhibition package.

To get in contact with Brian Pretorius or for information on his new company email him at - [brianpretorius14@gmail.com](mailto:brianpretorius14@gmail.com) or phone his mobile on - 0433 102 005.



## Getting to Know: Uluru/Ayers Rock

by: Jill Varley

Conferencing in the Red Centre, with its awe-inspiring living cultural landscape, has taken on a whole new look since the completion of a \$30 million upgrade to Voyages Ayers Rock Resort. It's a thoughtful refurbishment that includes the refreshment of the premium Sails in the Desert hotel and the construction of a contemporary conference centre.

Known as the Uluru Meeting Place, the upgrade and redevelopment of the conference centre, which opened in October last year effectively doubles its meeting size. Room spaces have advanced audio-visual equipment, seamlessly integrated into room spaces while a new exhibition space cum ballroom combines with three breakout rooms, a small function area, secretariat room and pre function space.

The Resort is managed by Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia and marketed by Accor, the world's largest hotel operator to maximise opportunities for Indigenous employment and development.

The Resort itself is the largest integrated resort complex in Australia, with five hotels - Sails in the Desert, Desert Gardens Hotel, Outback Pioneer & Lodge, Emu Walk Apartments, and Lost Camel Hotel, all of which have had enhancements.

With its strong Indigenous ethos, each of Ayers Rock Resort's purpose-built outdoor venues have their own inspiring elements. Instead of walls, the Centre's newest open-air restaurant 'Tali Wiru' has open sky. A unique experience for smaller groups, from here magnificent views of Uluru and the distant domes of Kata Tjuta can be seen. Then as you stand with a glass of champagne in hand, mesmerised by the sun setting across the desert, you are lead to your own beautiful dune to begin an indulgent culinary journey.

After dinner a local storyteller captivates with celestial creation stories.

Desert awakenings, sunrise breakfasts, inspiring encounters, starry, starry nights and warm welcomes from the traditional Anangu people - it's all part of an unforgettable Uluru experience.

