



AFTA

Awards

TOMORROW

night is the Australian travel industry's night of nights – the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) National Travel Industry Awards 2013, and it's set to make new records.



Taking the event to the next level, Jayson Westbury, AFTA's chief executive said the event which moves from its previous home at The Westin Sydney to the Hordern Pavilion will be making history with more than 1200 people attending.

"This is the industry's big event and AFTA is very proud to be the host," he said.

With an impressive list of 33 finalists in categories covering accommodation, airlines, car rental and more along with the prestigious Best Business Events Agency, and Andrew Daddo as the Master of Ceremonies, plus lots of great lucky door prizes, it's certain to be a great night.

But what I'm really looking forward to seeing is the room centrepiece - said to be the biggest mirror ball in the southern hemisphere!

MEANWHILE speaking of gongs we've had an award of our own.

David Lowe, director of sales and marketing at Accor's Sebel Pier One and the Harbour Rocks Hotel, in a rare moment of enthusiasm (I jest), said "I love *Business Events News* - it's the industry's new watercooler!" *Jill*

Starwood commands the sand



CAPITALISING on double-digit growth in the Australian market from mass exposure of Hawaii in publications and TV, Starwood Hotels & Resorts saw two of their PR team (**pictured above**) - Scott Kawasaki director of PR for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Waikiki and Bree Dallwitz, senior director communications Pacific for Starwood's Maui properties, in Australia this week.

With 11 Starwood hotels across four islands, including Sheraton, Westin, The Luxury Collection and soon St Regis, Kawasaki said to **BEN**, "with 4000 rooms between our properties, we basically command the sand in Waikiki."

The hospitality company isn't standing still either, with Kawasaki further revealing that \$1 billion is being spent on repositioning the Starwood resorts in the destination.

The investment, which includes a \$40 million renovation to the historic Moana Surfrider, (the only place alcohol can be served on the beach in Hawaii) and \$70 million to be spent making over the Royal Hawaiian, will see two of the three towers of the Sheraton Princess Kaiulani demolished during a renovation which will reduce its room count and make way for a St Regis branded hotel.

The Sheraton Waikiki, fresh from a \$188 million renovation to its 1634 rooms plus landscaping and four pools, has Waikiki's largest hotel ballroom in their International Conference Center of the Pacific which is able to host up to 2000 delegates.

MEANWHILE in Maui, which Dallwitz described as "having more nightlife but being more laid back than Waikiki," is the Sheraton Maui at the foot of the legendary Black Rock with a \$6.5 million renovation to its 509 guest rooms and suites.

There's also The Westin with its innovative meeting and banquets in the redesigned Aloha Pavilion with a unique indoor-outdoor look, The Westin Ka'anapali Ocean Resort Villas with 1021 studio and one-bedroom villas set on 26 acres, and the St Regis Princeville which underwent a multi-million dollar transformation in 2009.

HGA appoints MacKay



HOSTS

Global Alliance (HGA), a worldwide consortium of select Destination Management Companies, has appointed

Marty MacKay as president.

Bringing great skills and knowledge to the Hosts Global Alliance team, MacKay was previously president of eight owned offices for Global Events Partners.

Based in Washington DC, MacKay's responsibilities will be on the Alliance, growing its global brand, and developing the structure and metrics around the Alliance.

Invite to the Queenstown Roadshow

ALMOST thirty suppliers, including a number of new and exciting operators, are making the journey across the Tasman to showcase their products when the Queenstown Australia Roadshow rolls into Sydney on Wednesday 11 September.

Everything you wanted to know about beautiful Queenstown, surrounded by majestic mountains and set on Lake Wakatipu in New Zealand, can be accessed during this C&I Cocktail function.

Being held in the Ivy Ballroom, 6pm-8pm, 360 George Street - guests can get up-to-date information on conference and incentive group travel and also have the chance to win a fantastic trip for two to Queenstown including airfares and seven nights' accommodation.

To attend email janak@queenstownNZ.com.nz by 31 July.

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destination



ONE of the world's most talked-about destinations, Washington, DC attracts nearly 18 million visitors each year.

People come from around the world to see all that the nation's capital has to offer.

And, in fact, many associations, corporations and travel planners report record-high attendance for their Washington, DC meetings and group tours.

Washington, DC is a true global village, home to people of all different cultures, plus more than 170 embassies and international cultural centers, making it easy to conduct international business.

In Washington, DC, clients enjoy access to leaders in politics, media, research and industry as well as dozens of academic universities.

Many meeting planners tap into these local resources to tempt clients with an experience they cannot find anywhere else.

Also unique to the city is its unmatched assortment of free attractions, from the magnificent monuments and memorials on the National Mall to must-see sites like the National Gallery of Art, Library of Congress and the museums of the Smithsonian Institution.

With three airports, a Metro system and plenty of pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and bike paths, DC is easy to get to and around.

The city also has more than 30,000 hotel rooms.

From registration and reservation services to lead distribution, Destination DC's team delivers powerful support to make any gathering a success.

See www.washington.org.

Club Med's significant growth



CLUB Med Australia has reported a 100% uplift in MICE bookings year-on-year in 2013, with its innovative 'Rent-a-Resort' proving particularly popular and enquiries for the concept tripling.

Building on its existing Asian presence in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Japan, Club Med is launching a second resort in China, Club Med Guilin, in September this year.

Brendon King, groups and incentives manager for Club Med Australia and New Zealand said that there has been significant growth in group bookings at popular resorts in Bali, Cherating Beach and Phuket, which cater for Rent-a-Resort events for up to 900 guests, including names such as ING Bank, Nutrimetics, KFC and

Capricornare.

"We're very proud that 70% of our Rent-a-Resort clients have booked a subsequent event at Club Med," King said.

The new Chinese property is located in a breathtaking UNESCO World Heritage area, and has luxury facilities for up to 480 guests and features a lakeside sculpture park and a limestone cave that hosts atmospheric candle-lit events.

"Guilin is perfect for companies looking for a really inspiring, unexpected destination.

"It's easily accessible from Australia and will provide delegates with a unique cultural experience, set amongst one of the most spectacular landscapes in China," King said.

"We've already received a number of requests for quotes for Guilin, before the resort has even been officially launched in Australia," King said.

For more information visit www.clubmedgroups.com.au.

IACC appoints MCI

MCI, the globally integrated association management company, is to provide operational and administrative services to the International Association of Conference Centers on a worldwide basis.

Announced by IACC'S global president, Peter Stewart he said that "MCI will provide the administrative services supporting our association and its chapters through dedicated staff located in Chicago, Brussels, and Singapore from early September."

Citing that "like many associations around the world, IACC had been faced with a changing operating environment and the need to implement strategies that would sustain it well into the future.

"As the demand for membership services evolves and emerging technologies change the way we all interact with each other IACC will be well placed to respond in the future," he said.



TOP of the pops in a global research project of 10,000 travellers from InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), is the stress caused by the lack of internet connection for Australian business travellers.

Logging on to the internet, the survey found, helps people feel most at home in their hotel room and that more Australians than Brits check in with loved ones when away on travel.

The global research, commissioned to mark the launch this month of IHG's renamed loyalty programme, IHG Rewards Club, reveals the internet stress factor surpasses other travelling annoyances such as difficult transport links (39%), with one in seven respondents (15%) said they would refuse to travel alone or for work at all if they had no way of connecting with people back home.

More Australians now choose visual online communication such as Skype or FaceTime (7%) than texting (6%), with the new technologies the second most popular method of staying in touch with family for Australians travelling away from home.

Top ABEE tips from Karen

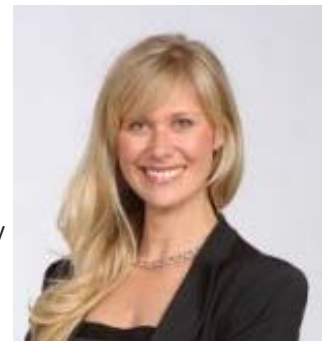
WITH less than a month to go until ABEE and Sydney's Event Showcase, event director Karen Krieger has some important tips she swears by on how to work smarter rather than harder.

Be prepared for a long day: Take care of yourself and your team so you can function correctly. Eat proper meals, stay hydrated and bring comfortable shoes.

Have a Plan B: We hate talking about this in the event industry, but unfortunately things happen, and as an event planner and director, it's your job to have a backup plan in place.

Delegate duties: As an event director, you need to have faith in your team and delegate responsibilities to each member. Never work an event alone, no matter how small. Things always pop up and it's best to have a team you trust on hand and ready to help.

Use the best vendors: You're only as good as your worst supplier. Make sure you've aligned yourself with the top vendors in the special event community and you'll never have to worry about putting your event at risk.





business events news

19th July 2013

Macau hosts tourism forum

WHEN Macau hosts the upcoming Global Tourism Economy Forum, the chairman and ceo of Las Vegas' iconic Wynn Resorts, Stephen Wynn, will be among a host of key speakers.

Being held 17-19 September in the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre, other speakers include Shao Qi Wei, chairman of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and Michael Frenzel, chairman of the World Travel and Tourism Council.

They will be joined by Mari Elka Pangestu, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of Republic of Indonesia, Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism of Cambodia and Dr Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of World Tourism Organisation UNWTO.

2013 will be the second consecutive year the forum has been hosted in the former Portuguese enclave, with over 1000 delegates from 34 cities around the world there last year.

This year's topic – Regenerate Our Economies: Invest in Travel and Tourism – is expected to attract another high-level gathering of key decision-makers in the global travel and tourism sector.

The forum is billed as one of the most important tourism events in China's affluent Pearl River Delta



region.

Registration costs US\$650 or 5070 MOP, group discounts apply.

See www.GTE-Forum.com.

qualia appoints Taverner

MATTHEW Taverner has been named as the new gm of Whitsundays luxury resort qualia.

Bringing to the role 28 years experience in the hospitality and tourism industries, including over 20 years in managerial roles, his last post was in Hong Kong and he will commence on 01 Aug.

Glenn Bourke, Hamilton Island Enterprises' ceo said: "Matthew is a veteran hotelier with an undeniable wealth of experience across multiple facets of travel, tourism and hospitality."

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Face to Face with...

Andrew Klein,
Director

SPIKE Presentations



Business Events News recently caught up with SPIKE Presentations director Andrew Klein. For the past 17 years, he has worked as a Professional Conference and Event MC and Presentation & Pitching Skills trainer. He is a former corporate lawyer who changed career paths in 1995 and since then has been working as a Professional MC, speaker and trainer. Klein has become well-known on the conference circuit in Australia and Asia, for his ability to involve the audience in proceedings, his revealing speaker introductions, humorous conference commentary, improvisational skills and ability to adapt to different audiences. Andrew likes coaching basketball, getting his hair cut, reading Dr Seuss books and trying to convince his wife and 3 young kids that he has a real job.

What does your role entail?

There are two sides to my work. I am a professional conference & event MC as well as trainer & speaker on Presentation Skills and Pitching Skills.

What's the first thing you do when you get in the office?

When not at a conference or training day, I work from home - so the first thing I usually do is take the kids to school, grab a coffee, return home, put the Vegemite away and walk upstairs into the "office".

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Travelling/being away from home. It's part of the job but important to get the balance right. My biggest challenge though is explaining to people that what I do is actually a legitimate career!

How do you inspire your team?

I'm a one-man business. So contrary to that cliched motivational saying, I can actually say there is an "I" in team - as I am the team. The down side to that is if I call in sick, I know I'm lying. The upside is that I clean up in the Melbourne Cup Office Sweep! But having three kids at private school keeps me constantly inspired & motivated.

Dealing with new technology - bonus or headache?

Definitely a bonus. And particularly because I have a 12 year old "IT Manager" who lives and works in the bedroom downstairs.

What would you be doing if your weren't director of SPIKE Presentations?

I was formerly a corporate lawyer, so if I wasn't doing this, I'd probably be a depressed, miserable law firm Partner having a mid-life crisis. Also, I often get told I would have made a good Wiggle.

Who has inspired you?

The late Ron Tacchi, one of the founding fathers of the Australian speaking industry. In the late 90's, he was the first person to say "You're good at this!" and to point out how you can have a sustainable career in the MC/speaking industry.

What makes a great conference?

A conference organiser with imagination and a real understanding of the delegates. Dynamic, engaging speakers. Getting the right balance between education and networking. And a great MC of course to pull it all together.

What is the most inspiring conference you have been involved in?

As a conference MC I am lucky enough to hear inspiring speakers all the time. But as for an entire conference, I can't go past a series of Government Mental Health Conferences I did in Melbourne last year for Mental Health Carers. The most dedicated, passionate, caring delegates I've ever met.

How many conferences have you attended in the last year?

About 46. But who's counting?