



What a larf!

IF there is one thing I am constantly reminded of as we interact with people across the range of industries we are related to, is that no one is one-dimensional.

We are truly the sum total of many parts.

It's a fact that was brought home during a recent IHG InterContinental and Crowne Plaza Adelaide famil.

Jennifer Dullens, a bdm at the Crowne Plaza, has devised a number of conversation-creating question cards as social icebreakers and such is their success, she has created a business called the Chatterbox Collection.

We tested out her Classic Collection at a Crowne Plaza dinner where a question card was placed on our dinner plates.

Each person around the table asked their question in turn.

The result was almost non-stop laughter and hilarious story producing answers.

There are editions for other occasions too such as the Black Label, Family, Girls Only and the Wedding Edition.

Check out the range on chatterboxcollections.com, they make an extremely funky gift.

Have a great week! Jill



No room at the (Sydney) inn

PRINCE Harry and the International Fleet Review, One Direction, Ricky Martin, Roosters and Sea Eagles and Parramasala Festival in Western Sydney, Spring Carnival Racing at Royal Randwick and the Manly Jazz Festival - phew, if you weren't in Sydney this past weekend you missed seeing the harbour city at its best.

"It is estimated these events will deliver \$1.2 billion of visitor spend, reclaiming our status as the major events capital of Australia," said George Souris,

NSW Minister for Tourism.

According to Mantra Hotels' director of operations Tomas Johnsson, bookings were already strong despite local NRL teams making the finals series, and expectations of 100% occupancies over the weekend.

And Accor Sydney CBD hotels recorded their best non-New Year's Eve performance ever, with a record 99% occupancy at an average daily rate of \$310 - which represented a 41% increase from the same Saturday in 2012 and a 27% increase on the same long weekend from 2012.

General manager for Accor hotels in NSW, Scott Boyes said, "We were forecasting occupancy levels to sit around the 94% mark going into the weekend, but with a surge in last minute bookings our average occupancy levels across 14 CBD hotels sat at a record breaking 99%.

"With average rates for the Saturday night sitting at close to \$300, it presented a huge windfall for our hotels and one which will carry them through for a bumper October," he said.

Get shot professionally

YOU can say goodbye to selfies posted on Facebook and LinkedIn and hello to a professionally styled profile photograph at Office Sydney 2013.

Oneill Photographics, the show's official photographer is offering the opportunity to have a professional photo taken, in a studio setting.

These experienced corporate photographers will shoot one head and shoulder shot that truly reflects your professional self.

Find them in Hall 4, Stand B54, Office Sydney, Sydney Exhibition and Convention Centre, 16-17 Oct.

The cost is \$55.00+GST - **CLICK HERE** for examples.

Work now, stay later

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts are offering Starpoints members who earn revenue generated by the group booking of the Starwood Preferred Planner (SPP) programme, one free night's stay to be credited to member accounts, for every 50 room nights that are booked.

The more room nights booked, the more free nights SPP members will earn - with no limits on the number of free nights that can be earned.

Starwood senior vice-president, sales - Asia-Pacific, Alison Taylor, said, "Meeting planners know that Starwood is the easiest hotel company to do business with and the 'Work Now, Stay Later' promotion is yet another demonstration of our unique approach."

PCO 2013 Conference & Exhibition

THOSE planning on attending The PCO 2013 Conference & Exhibition, "Business Events: New World Management Strategies," should register soon to secure a discounted fee, with early bird registration closing on 17 Oct.

The conference will discuss ongoing challenges and opportunities in the sector, emerging trends and the strategies required to prosper in the Meetings World of tomorrow.

Delegates will be presented with a range of options on how to deliver the best outcomes in an environment of ever changing technology, globalisation and the rapid rise of the internet.

Register online at the website conference.pco.asn.au.



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business events news

9th October 2013

AYANA introduces RIMBA

RIMBA

Jimbaran Bali, another unique project by AYANA Resort and Spa, was strategically opened in September, to accommodate high-level delegations and meetings ahead of the APEC Summit this month.



Also under the management of Capella Hotel Group, RIMBA features 282 rooms and suites to expand on AYANA's 368 rooms and villas, with the eight hectare resort located within AYANA's spacious 77-hectare grounds.

RIMBA's facilities include state-of-the-art MICE offerings, massive multi-tiered bodies of water including six swimming pools, pool access rooms and a swim-up pool bar; Bali's first Ah Yat Abalone Seafood Restaurant; the

ultra-glam UNIQUE roof-top bar & pool; and such things as a scenic jogging track and complimentary resort shuttle connecting RIMBA to AYANA and Kubu Beach.

To celebrate its opening, RIMBA Jimbaran Bali has launched an introductory offer for all bookings received before 22 December.

Book direct to save up to 36% on special benefits including daily buffet breakfast, Balinese massage for two people and US\$50 Resort Credit per room - bookings@rimbajimbaran.com.



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SYDNEY

Plaza Athénée first

THE Plaza Athénée Bangkok has successfully completed the final stage of ISO 20121 certification, making it the first ISO 20121 accredited hotel in the world.

Certified for the planning and delivery of sustainable meetings, a comprehensive audit covered every aspect of the hotel's operations and was independently conducted by SGS.

"We are very pleased to have successfully implemented ISO 20121 standards because we believe that economic growth and the wellbeing of society are inextricably tied to the health of the environment," explained general manager ChooLeng Goh.

A Sustainability Event Management System Plan offered to MICE clients includes the "Green Meeting Package" with tables and chairs without linen, setting up stationery and water stations as-needed, air conditioning set at 25°C, avoiding unnecessary paper presentations and eco-friendly coffee breaks.

Core-apps expansion

FOR the past three years creative and technical services provider Invisage has been offering Core-apps Event App technology exclusively to the local industry.

Now Core-apps has acquired event management software firm GoExpo in a deal that will provide Invisage's Australasian clients with additional, globally proven, Event Tech services.

Invisage's Darren Edwards said a key feature of the deal is that GoExpo already integrates with its "class leading" EventLink and FollowMe tools, with the move allowing the immediate offering of seamless content integration across all products.

Putting on the Ritz

RITZ-CARLTON is set to operate a \$450m newbuild hotel in Perth's Elizabeth Quay development, after developers Far East Consortium won the right to build a 250-room property plus 350 apartments in the project.

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business events news

9th October 2013



IF you are over the cost of staying at a high end, five star plus hotel in London, the good news is that a stylish new hotel is to open this month, the QBIC London City with rooms from £59 a night.

In east London on Adler Street, a few minutes walk from Liverpool Street station and close to Brick Lane and Shoreditch High Street, guests, they say, will find: "immaculate cleanliness, a comfortable bed, a great shower, soundless bedrooms and free WiFi."

By the way, claustrophobics take note; the £59 room (below) has no view - and no window.

However, from £69 there are rooms with a courtyard view, some from £74 with a street view and still others from £84 with a park view.



Huka very big fish

NZ'S fabulous luxury Huka Lodge has a special offer ideal for a small incentive group or corporate retreat

Two night double-occupancy bookings for at least five Junior Lodge Suites will include a complimentary two-hour trout fishing adventure charter with expert guidance from Chris Jolly, on board a private launch cruising Lake Taupo for the entire party.

Offer valid 01 Oct-14 Dec - see www.hukalodge.co.nz.

Tourism NZ new team

TOURISM New Zealand has added two more key market appointments to their international business events team.

Helen Bambry has been appointed business events manager Australia, based in Sydney while Cristina McLauchlan has been appointed business events manager South & South East Asia, based in Singapore.

Bambry joins from Millenium Hotels & Resorts where her most recent role has been sales manager, conferences & incentives, while McLauchlan has more than 15 years experience organising high profile events, most recently with Avantgarde in China.

Houston, we have BestCities

The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHCVB) is set to host its first BestCities client workshop.

Held annually in different BestCities destinations, the client workshop has proven to be one of the most successful services offered by the alliance for both meeting planner and partner bureau.

"Hosting a client workshop in only our second year as a BestCities partner is a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase our city to international clients as well as demonstrate the alliance's collaborative approach to business," said Greg Ortale, president and ceo of GHCVB.



Sitting Pretty

Singapore Airlines Business Class

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

*Singapore Airlines is the airline of choice for many business and premium leisure travellers, with its premium cabins setting the benchmark for other carriers. **Business Events News** recently experienced the carrier's A380 Business Class product on a flight between Sydney and Singapore.*

THE SEAT

The sheer scale of the Airbus A380 has seen Singapore Airlines produce what has to be aviation's widest business class seat. Located on the top deck of the superjumbo, seats are arranged in a forward-facing 1-2-1 format so everyone has easy aisle access and plenty of privacy. It's claimed to be the "most spacious business class the world has ever seen," and from **BEN's** experience that is certainly true.

As well as providing plenty of room to relax or work, the seat folds down into a fully flat bed, and you sleep on a proper mattress which we have found to be very comfortable.

The seat is equipped with conveniently located USB and power ports for charging devices, and there's a large table with plenty of room for a laptop or to spread out work documents.

ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

Singapore Airlines has always been a strong innovator, and its KrisWorld inflight entertainment system is no exception. Recently the airline announced the world first deployment of the Panasonic eX3 technology on some of its newest aircraft. The A380 **BEN** was on featured the previous generation of the system which is completely adequate, with a huge array of new release movies, TV shows, CDs and other content to while away the hours in flight. The on-demand system is very responsive, allowing shows to be easily paused, resumed and rewound as required so you don't miss a moment of the action. Noise reducing headphones are provided, reducing the sound from the already extremely quiet cabin of the A380s.

SERVICE

In **BEN's** experience the cabin crew make a huge impact on one's overall impression of a flight, and Singapore Airlines does not disappoint. Service on both sectors was discreet and unobtrusive, thoughtfully anticipating whatever was required. Meals were interesting and delicious, with a great mix of Asian and Western dishes on offer. A slight disappointment was company policy which meant that some of **BEN's** family members travelling on the same flight in economy class were sent scurrying after coming forward for a chat!

On the ground Singapore Airlines offers lounges across the globe, and on flights from several ports including Sydney, Melbourne, Singapore and London you can also "book the cook" by preselecting your meals from an expanded menu of dining options prior to departure.



CONTACT US:

Publisher	Editor	Contributors/Coordinator
Bruce Piper	Jill Varley	Chantel Housler

For advertising enquiries email Christie-Lee or Chantel on: advertising@businesseventsnews.com.au

P: 1300 799 220 F: 1300 799 221

PO Box 1010 Epping, NSW, 1710

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