



AIME for the best SOFITEL

Melbourne on Collins' AIME Welcome



afterparty has become a much sought invite.

This year's Les Miserables themed, star-studded event with French inspired food didn't disappoint; Accor's photos (page 4) are worth checking out to see who made the cut!

Speaking with Karina Lance, head of sales & conventions services at the Dubai Convention Bureau revealed that they are expecting a 16,000 strong incentive from Nuskin China in April - it is the biggest incentive ever to be held in Dubai.

During an AIME Melbourne tour of new venues, we were introduced to The Park located lakeside at Albert Park.

Opened just four months ago, the function and conference venue has a large outside deck and groups hosting events here receive 15% off rooms at the newly refurbished Hotel Pullman Melbourne Albert Park, directly opposite the venue.

Interestingly, Melbourne Convention Bureau ceo Karen Bolinger said that more people in Melbourne attend a cultural event rather than a sporting one.

Finally, thank you AIME 2014, we do come away better informed, our pockets filled with new contacts, yet somewhat hung-over from too much of a good thing. Jill

ICE targets corporate

AIME 2014 saw the launch of the Incentive Conference & Event (ICE) Society, with aims to target the corporate sector.

President Nigel Gaunt said ICE's secretariat had opened in Hong Kong and was looking to hire an education director by mid year, to get educational programmes up and running.

The new professional body aimed to cover the incentive travel, conference, corporate meetings and events industry across Asia Pacific, with Gaunt saying there was currently no pan-Asian boda that covered the area in this space.

ICE aimed to have 3000 members within three years, with a target audience of corporate customers of the industry, those who ran meetings and incentives for corporations and small to medium enterprises.

Gaunt said ICE would go to the "sharp end of the ship", or the corporate customers who committed to events, and controlled the budget. Other organisations mainly had members who were intermediaries or suppliers, which resulted in "industry talking to industry talking to industry."

He said the industry needed to professionalise itself before someone else did so for them, such as the government. This would involve the education director cherry picking content

and offering it to members, in the second half of 2015. There was also the possibility of paying a fee to organisations such as the Meetings and Events Association (MEA) for their education, possibly translated into Mandarin for the Asian market, Gaunt said.

AIME after parties

AFTER the joys and challenges of a day on the AIME floor, a glass of bubbly or a cool beer looms large in the collective consciousness.



Tuesday night, set aside for hotel groups to entertain clients and hosted buyers, saw IHG hierarchy host guests in a laneway covered in colourful graffiti at the InterContinental's Coffee Experience diner at St Ali, before moving indoors for a gourmet dinner.

Pictured from left are SoolNua managing partner Patrick Delaney, InterContinental Adelaide commercial director Jakki Temple Govan and InterContinental Thailand area dsm Melina Lampier.



MEANWHILE the Pan Pacific Hotels Group hosted a night of fine dining and entertainment at The Deck @ Circa The Prince for VIP clients where entertainment included a performance by Australia's Wendy Matthews (pictured above), during a three-course dinner.

All in the family

THE Whitsundays is to be propelled onto the world stage when the hit comedy series 'Modern Family' films arrives in the region later this month as part of the show's highly anticipated Australia vacation episode.



Whitsundays Marketing and Development Limited (WMDL) acting chief executive officer Daryl Hudson said it was the first time the show had filmed an episode outside of the United States providing immense exposure for the region.

"WMDL will be working with Tourism and Events Queensland as well as the local tourism industry to maximise exposure for the Whitsundays and leverage of such an opportunity."

Ex visitor nos up 30%

THE number of unique visitors to the top 30 audited exhibitions in Australia and New Zealand has increased by 30% for the 2013 financial year.

At AIME, the Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA) and the Audited Media Association of Australia (AMAA) presented the data, which translated to 321,544 visitors.

Trade and consumer shows attracted up to 28,000 visitors, and of the top 30 expos, 12 were held in Melbourne.

Eleven were held in Sydney, seven of which were held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

EEAA chief executive Joyce DiMascio said the data provided solid evidence of the power of exhibitions to drive incremental visitation to the hosting cities.

Shanghai China
 中国上海
 Shanghai China
 发现更多·体验更多
 More Discovery More Experience
 www.meet-in-shanghai.net
 Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration
 Australian representative, phone (02) 9267 7715, level 11/99 Bathurst St, Sydney 2000



And the winner is...

FIRST among equals at the AIME Awards for 2014 is exhibition industry dynamo Joyce DiMascio.

DiMascio was awarded Industry Person of the Year during the AIME CEO Summit.

Reed Travel Exhibitions director for AIME and CIBTM Jacqui Timmins said DiMascio, the chief executive of the Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA), was a terrific advocate for the business events industry, whose passion for moving it forward made her a formidable force and one of the sector's most driven leaders.



"Joyce's determination to see the business events industry evolve, and the way in which she works closely with events such as AIME to highlight the vital contribution exhibitions and

Koh Samui special

A **FULL** day meeting package of US\$57 per person per day, for a minimum of 20 guests and half day at US\$44, minimum 20 guests is being offered by Hansar Samui, on Koh Samui's up-market Bophut Bay, in Thailand.

The resort with 74 luxurious beachfront guestrooms also offers WiFi and internet access, two coffee breaks for full day users and lunch and a 15 minute foot massage per person with a 20% discount on additional spa bookings.

Valid to 19 Dec - visit www.hansarsamui.com for more information.

events make to our sector, means she is a fitting recipient of this year's prize."

The Best Environmental Stand award went to Townsville Convention Bureau for their careful attention to detail on energy efficiency, a low carbon footprint and use of environmentally friendly products.

ExpoNet won for Best Innovative stand, while the AFTA Best Business Travel Award Stand went to American Express Meetings & Events.

Best New Stand went to Haycom, whose hologram heart will be on display at White Night this weekend, and Best Stand over 36 sqm was awarded to Business Events Sydney.

Best Stand under 36 sqm was Decorative Events and finally, the winner of the People's Choice Award, voted by AIME attendees and exhibitors, went to Disney Destinations International.

Timmins said all exhibitors showcased amazing stands and the level of creativity and imagination on display blew the judging panel away.

Avoiding turbulence

ACCOR and Virgin Australia are offering organisers who book and pay for 10 conference packages (accommodation, day delegate arrangements and flights) an 11th delegate package free when they take advantage of a new conference incentive.

The incentive encourages planners to 'avoid event turbulence' and head to Queensland for their next meeting or event.

The package also includes access to Virgin Australia's 'The Lounge'.

Delegates will also receive complimentary room upgrades for VIPs and a cocktail party including canapés.

Bookings must be made by Feb 28 2015 for business held to 31 Mar 2015.

Rezidor's new brands

ONE of the world's largest hotel groups, Carlson Rezidor, has announced they will launch two new global hotel brands.

First is Radisson Red, a "lifestyle select" brand, designed and developed to deliver today's customer the experience of tomorrow.

The next is Quorvus Collection, a collection of luxury hotels, which will reflect and respond to the sensibilities of the global traveller while celebrating the culture of each location.

The group aims to have more than 60 Radisson Red hotels and 20 hotels in the Quorvus Collection by 2020.

Crown's free WiFi

CROWN Hotels is offering free WiFi to all guests across all its Australian properties.

The initiative was launched in Melbourne and Perth in December, and is now available in all five of its properties including Crown Towers.

Hotel guests can access the internet on up to two devices.

Get involved locally

PROFESSIONAL Convention Management Association (PCMA) ceo Sherrif Karamat said Australia could attract congresses and conferences by getting involved with societies based in Australia.

There were more than 800 board members of medical organisations headquartered in Australia and the business events industry could engage with these board members to attract various medical and other conventions to the country, he said.

Another way to attract events business was to look at what was happening in the region.

Australia had a number of Asia Pacific-centric societies, headquartered in Australia, and fostering this, and the growth, research and industry which grew out of this, could result in more events business for the country, Karamat said.

Difficulties that Australia faced included managing global teams, increased regulations, the differences in intellectual property rights between Western countries and some Asian countries and the speed of change of societies, particularly the dissemination of information, Karamat said.



THIS conversation on LinkedIn's 'Who's Who in Events' network provides some tick through suggestions when it comes to deciding if a venue is right for your client.

The suggestions included the number of meeting rooms and sizes, the exhibition space in sqm, the ceiling height of the largest room or exhibition space, the number of hotel rooms within walking distance, catering facilities, AV services, access to WiFi and disabled services, parking spaces and access to public transportation.

Similarly, an audiovisual company suggested checking the sqm for plenary rooms, distance for back projections, ceiling height for the main room, which it said was very important, light control for the plenary room (sun light and electric light) and an independent power supply.

A special events company said that for outdoor locations it was important to check access to water, rest rooms, electricity for generator sets, and parking spaces.

Lighthouse fills void

THE Australian National Maritime Museum (the Museum) has added a new event venue, the Lighthouse Gallery, to their event venue portfolio.

Filling a void in the Sydney event industry, it offers an addition to the Museum's already strong portfolio of venues.



The Lighthouse Gallery comes equipped with leading event technology and is supported by the Museum's experienced event team and catering experts, Laissez-Faire.

The addition brings the Museum's portfolio of venues to eight.

Bookings can be made now for events to be held from the beginning of April.



business events news

21st February 2014

Spencer specials

THE Spencer on Byron Hotel is offering a meeting or group special for March and April; for NZ\$79 per person, the meeting special gives a complimentary screen and projector, and the dinner special gives complimentary room hire, black chair covers and more.

Access to leaders

BEN Roberts-Smith VC & Medal for Gallantry, marketer, and customer service specialist Amanda Stevens, financial and business advisor, Peter Switzer and coach and pitch/presentation expert, Trevor Ambrose, will present at The Peak Performance Business Conference on 27 Mar.

Mining Bendigo

SUCH was the local interest in AIME's pre tour of Bendigo, the *Bendigo Advertiser* was waiting at the Central Deborah Gold Mine.

Geared up in overalls, boots and miners' hats, the Hosted Buyers rode the iron cage 20 stories beneath the ground.

The mesmerising journey saw them exploring the underground tunnels, drifts and stope workings that still contain gold veins.

It was something of a surprise when out of the darkness, walls seeping with water and glittering with fool's gold, appeared an Underground Function room.



The two day tour included a private tram transfer to the Golden Dragon Museum, lunch in the vault of a former bank at the Rocks on Rosalind, a master class in pottery making at Bendigo Pottery, a sumptuous dinner at Mason's in the old WD Masons glass shop, walks through the city's Arts precinct, breakfast at the Brewhouse with pulled pork pizza on the breakfast menu and walls covered in graffiti, lunch at the Public Inn in Castlemaine and accommodation at the Quality Resort All Seasons Bendigo.

AIBTM reg open

REGISTRATION for Hosted Buyers for the Americas Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (AIBTM) is now open.

AIBTM takes place from 10 to 12 JUN in Orlando, and Hosted Buyer applications are now being accepted online.

To register, **CLICK HERE**.

Book for reward

WYNDHAM Hotel Group has launched a new rewards-based booking promotion for conference and event bookers.

The Pick Your Perk initiative gives clients the freedom to choose their rewards when they book an event at one of 11 participating properties.

Depending on the level of spend it includes appliances, adventure vouchers and even the ability to donate the value of the perk to charity.

Properties include Wyndham Resort Torquay, Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre Marcoola Beach, Sunshine Coast and Ramada Plaza Noumea.

CONFERENCE FOMO

Andrew Klein, director of SPIKE Presentations, presents his front line observations on conferences in a regular feature in *BEN*.



FOMO. Fear of Missing Out. For those readers over the age of 17, a Google search describes FOMO as a form of social anxiety — a concern that one might miss an opportunity for social interaction, a novel experience or other satisfying event.

Last month, I experienced a strange form of FOMO, something I imagine is only felt by compulsive conference-goers like myself....and perhaps some of you?

I choose to call this condition FOMOOC. Fear Of Missing Out On Conferences.

Let me explain.

Over the recent holiday break, I travelled with my family to Vietnam for three wonderful weeks of relaxation, cultural and historical experiences, beautiful natural sights, culinary wonders and most importantly, family time. And not a shred of work.

But on several occasions when staying in hotels in Hanoi or Saigon and a resort in Nha Trang, I could not help but read the daily hotel notice board and observe the conferences or events taking place that day. As a regular conference-goer, who spends countless days conferencing in hotels, I must admit it felt odd, being right there, in the midst of the conference, yet NOT being part of the conference.

At breakfast I observed the common sight of those stilted conversations of conference delegates sharing tables with their new friends. In the evening I noticed them gathering in clumps in the lobby, waiting for the transfer to their gala dinner. I found myself wondering what exciting destination they were heading to. I'd read the banners outside the concurrent rooms. I even found myself peeking into open ballroom doors, to check out the speakers or to see whether their MC was doing a good job. He wasn't, but I'm biased.

Don't get me wrong. I didn't want to attend. I was having the time of my life with my family. It's just that it felt strange for familiar looking conferences to be going on all around me.....without me. Am I that egotistical? Narcissistic? Or just plain tragic? Not sure, but I'm glad I've got that off my chest.

As an aside, amongst the many exciting things I learnt in a Vietnam, allow me to pass on one piece of wisdom, which I found out the hard way. When your waiter asks if you're enjoying your meal, no matter how tasty it is, don't reply "Yum!!!"

In Vietnamese "Yum" translates to "I'm horny". The waiter looked at me very strangely.

For more information about Andrew and what he can do for you at your next conference email andrew@lunch.com.au or visit his website at www.andrewklein.com.au.

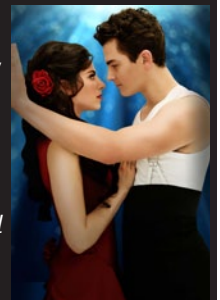


WIN TICKETS TO STRICTLY BALLROOM

Everyday this week *BEN* is giving away double passes to *Strictly Ballroom the Musical* playing at the Sydney Lyric in March.

Strictly Ballroom the Musical is the inspiring story of a championship ballroom dancer who defies all the rules to follow his heart.

To win, be the first person to send in the answer to the question below to: comp@businesseventsnews.com.au



What night is the opening for Strictly Ballroom the Musical?

Congratulations to Wednesday's winner Holly Scully from Orchard.

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Accor takes meeting planners to the stars!

21st February 2014

ACCOR kicked off AIME 2014 on Monday night with an exclusive gathering to celebrate and recognise its key conference and meeting planners.

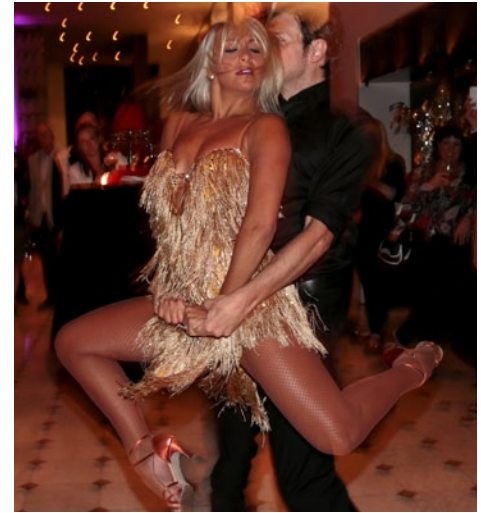
Accor's top business events clients were whisked from the official AIME welcome party to the luxurious Sofitel Melbourne on Collins hotel for a French-inspired cocktail party high above the city's skyline.

Guests were elevated to Sofitel's Level 35, which was glamorously transformed into chic Parisian, Club Etoiles. Bluesy jazz tunes of the three-piece Deborah Morgan trio drifted through the air while guests were tricked and delighted by roaming magician, Anthony de Masi.

Guests were surprised with a special appearance from *Dancing with the Stars* series 13 winner, Jessica Raffa and *So you Think You can Dance* choreographer Robbie Camalotti.

Both Raffa and Carmalotti posed as regular guests before setting the dance floor alight with their steamy rendition of the Argentinean Tango (right).

However, the pinnacle of the night came when *Les Misérables* cast members, Kerri Anne Greenland (Eponine) and Simon Gleeson (Jean Valjean) gave a spellbinding performance of the legendary musical's songs, *On my own* and *Bring Him Home*.



BELOW: Sofitel Melbourne on Collins gm Clive Scott; Simon Gleeson (Jean Valjean of *Les Misérables*); Graham Wilson, Accor; Kerrie Anne Greenland (Eponine in *Les Mis*); *Les Mis* musical director Geoffrey Castles; and Accor's Shirley Lin.

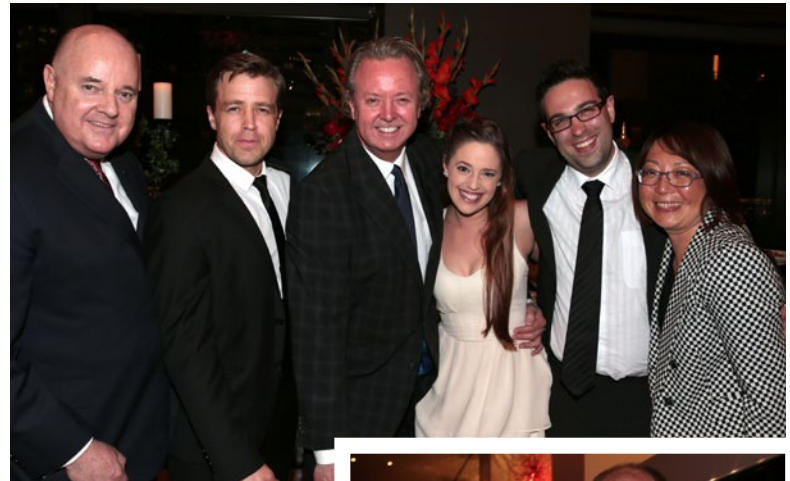


LEFT: Guests sipped on Parisian-inspired cocktails on arrival followed by flutes of French Veuve D'Argent Sparkling complemented by French-themed food stations serving freshly shucked oysters, terrines, French cheeses, crepes and mini servings of crème caramels.

BELOW: Linda Gaunt, Meetings Events Australia; Wayne Taylor from Taylored Images; and Joyce Weir, Qantas Airways.



BELOW: Natalie Bussenschutt from Accor; Mary Sparkman; Kate Murphy; and Charlotte Gutte, Accor.



RIGHT: Elizabeth Ford from Accor with Mike Pickford of ASN Events.



ABOVE: Graham Wilson, Accor; Fiona Byrne, Sofitel; and Jeremy Healy, Sofitel.



RIGHT: Susette Van Der Linden, HelmsBriscoe; Karen Jetson; and Erin O'Shannessy.

