



Too posh to push

ATTENDING

the Royale Limousines launch function, guests were transported to and from the function in one of the company's premium vehicles.



I was pretty chuffed to be picked up in a BMW 7 series with my driver Mark at the wheel, gliding us through the afternoon traffic and skirting hold-ups like butter on a hot knife.

The glamorous launch, complete with music performed by a classical quartet, was attended by Royale's clients and their partner companies.

I was later to learn the spike in limo transfers included cruise passengers who book limousines to take them from Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal to a Rocks hotel, metres away.

Too posh to push their luggage!

The icing on the cake after the function was that on my homeward journey, I was chauffeured in the \$1.3m Rolls-Royce Phantom Drophead.

I requested the driver to make as much noise as possible as he pulled up outside my home.

He obliged by beeping the well-bred horn profusely. *Jill*



Sleepless in Miami

THE ACTE Global Corporate Travel Conference in Miami, being held from 27 to 29 Apr, will feature Drew Boyd, co-author of 'Inside the Box,' described as one of those books that makes you lose sleep after you read it.

Boyd will introduce a creativity method used by corporations throughout the world, including Johnson & Johnson.

A Royale airport first

SYDNEY Airport's master plan was a catalyst for the official opening on Wednesday of the first dedicated limousine airport desk in Australia, Royale Limousines' Premium Customer Service Centre.

The plan is set to significantly improve the airport experience and is forecast to increase passenger numbers from almost 38m in 2013 to 74m passengers in 2033.

The new desk in the Arrivals Hall at Terminal 1 coincides with a spike in demand for luxury transfers among high-end inbound visitors to Australia, especially from China, which saw a 20% increase in demand from Chinese travellers during Chinese New Year 2014 over 2013.

Royale Limousines managing director John Bartolotta (pictured left) said there had already been a 10% growth in enquiries since the desk's soft opening in December, exceeding the company's expectations.

"Limousine travel is no longer just for a ceo taking a smooth ride to the airport.

"They are used by inbound leisure visitors for private shopping tours or day tours to the Hunter Valley wineries, businesses ferrying executives across town during corporate roadshows, convention groups, and families wanting a stress-free transfer to and from the airport with the kids and all that luggage."



The number of cruise ship passengers requesting limousine transfers to their hotel had been "off the dial," with 80 limousine transfers from a single cruise ship in January, Bartolotta said.

The limousine company operates Australia's largest luxury hire car fleet, with approximately 100 Australian and European vehicles including luxury sedans and stretch limousines.

Top of the range manufacturers in the fleet include Bentley, Ferrari and Aston Martin.

Stamford hosts AABF

THE Sir Stamford Circular Quay is to host the 2014 Australian Arab Businesswomen's Forum (AABF) on 06 and 07 Mar, during which attendees have the chance to meet and mingle with high-profile businesswomen from the Middle East.

Organised by Australian Businesswomen's Forum (ABF) and Women Chiefs of Enterprise International (WCEI), they will welcome international speakers from countries including the UK, Jordan, Saudia Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

This year's conference will focus on commercial opportunities between Australia and the Middle East, with particular reference to women.

Speakers will talk about topics including operating an Australian health services company in the Gulf region, the opportunities which Islamic finance is bringing to Australian companies looking to work in the Middle East and how to run an international cosmetic company from Morocco.

QF to drop PER-SIN

QANTAS has said it would withdraw from the Perth-Singapore route, effective as of 12 May.

At its half year results announcement, Qantas also said the services between Melbourne and London would be re-timed in November to reduce A380 ground time in Heathrow, but that there were no changes to overall London flight capacity.

NRL at SEC@GI

THE second major event to be held at the Sydney Exhibition Centre @ Glebe Island in mid-February, the NRL season launch, was announced by the NSW Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner on Wednesday night.

In welcoming the event he said, "For the first time 600 NRL club members have been invited to attend the event, giving hundreds of people a chance to visit this impressive venue on Sydney Harbour.

"It will be the NRL's biggest ever season launch with a total of close to 1000 people in attendance, including club members, players and officials."

Launched by the Sydney Roosters' 2013 premiership-winning skipper Anthony Minichiello and the newly appointed NRL ambassador and star musician Jessica Mauboy, Stoner said it was a real coup to host an event of this nature at Glebe Island.

Ibis Budget refurbbs

A \$3.2m refurbishment has been rolled out at three Ibis Budget hotels in Queensland and Victoria, following the re-branding of all Formule 1 hotels to the new Ibis Budget brand.

The brand is working from the design 'Avanzi' by Paris-based Philippe Avanzilicic, which includes bold designs, natural materials, bright colours and attractive lighting at Ibis Budget Brisbane Airport, Ibis Budget Melbourne Airport and Ibis Budget Dandenong.

All three feature cocoon-style guestrooms with contemporary furnishings and vibrant colours.

"This is a testament to Accor's confidence in continuing to strengthen its economy portfolio.

"Since the announcement of the three-tiered Ibis brand restructure in 2011, we have seen strong positive results across the Ibis brand family," said Simon McGrath, Accor Pacific chief operating officer.



Thai MICE visitors up

THE Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) said it has had strong first quarter results despite protests in the country's capital.

The first quarter, measured from October to December, saw nearly 187,000 MICE travellers, contributing more than \$534.4m in revenue, which was up 5% and 6% from the same period in 2013, respectively.

The Oceania market saw a 13.25% increase in visitor numbers to 7819 visitors, up 14.31% in revenue to \$22.35m.

At AIME, TCEB strategic and business development vice president Supawan Teerarat was quick to stress that the demonstrations in Bangkok, which began in October, were peaceful, saying all MICE venues in the capital were operating as normal.

The demonstrations had seen the cancellation of a number of events in January when the government declared a 'state of emergency', including three in the corporate market, she said.

To boost confidence, the TCEB has introduced rewards packages for the MICE industry. These include the Meetings Bonus, offering organisers

financial subsidies for groups of 200 or more delegates, staying three nights or longer to attend corporate meetings or incentive travel, with a group size of 200 garnering a subsidy of approximately \$3300 and groups of 500 getting about \$10,000.



The Conventions Bonus offers associations, PCOs, governments and educational institutions subsidies for groups of 300 or more delegates to international conventions in the country, with groups of 300 to 899 achieving a subsidy of about \$6600, and groups of 500 to 699 getting approximately \$10,000.

TCEB has also launched the global marketing campaign Thailand Connect, which focuses on Thailand's destinations, business opportunities and MICE industry.

Pictured **above** is TCEB president Nopparat Maythaveekulchai.

McEvoy joins Holland

ALI McEvoy has been named as Holland America's first community relations representative in Australia.

In her contract role, McEvoy will be responsible for overseeing corporate giving initiatives, including shipboard events, non-profit sponsorship opportunities and partnership activities in Sydney.

Joining several members of Holland America Line's community relations team, McEvoy has extensive knowledge of the non-profit community and charity events in Sydney, as well as the Australian tourism industry.

A swine of a venue

PIG is king at Sydney's newest culinary dining experience in the CBD, Swine & Co.

Located at 16 O'Connell Street, it's a venue that's sure to be the next big thing in corporate and event dinners.

It's the latest offering of The Urban Purveyor Group, the team behind some of Sydney's most sought after venues such as Sake Restaurant & Bar, Ananas Bar & Brasserie and The Cut Bar & Grill.



The new dining room, bar and deli is housed in the former Bank of New South Wales building and features three levels, including an open plan bar and deli on street level, a Champagne bar on the Mezzanine and an underground dining experience.

While the signature dish is suckling pig the other choices are extensive including king salmon and steak tartar.

Mapping Cairns

THE Cairns Convention Centre's local produce map, showing where food being served originated and providing evidence of food mile reduction, has proved a hit with conference organisers and delegates.

Food miles refers to the distance food is transported from production until consumer.

Now the mapping concept has been taken to a new level with a fully interactive map available on the Centre's website.

Electronic versions will be strategically placed during catered events allowing touch screen viewing.

By clicking on a product or town on the map, an image and relevant information is displayed.

Cairns Convention Centre general manager Ross Steele said the centre expected that the enhancements would be enjoyed by 14,000 conference guests attending this year, including delegates from the Australian Tourism Exchange in May and the G20 Finance Ministers and World Bank Governors Meeting in September.



THE knowledge you have probably been listening to a load of gibberish at one conference or another has been validated as two publishers are having to remove more than 120 conference papers from their subscription services after a French scientific researcher found that the works were computer composed gibberish, *Nature* reported.

Computer scientist Cyril Labbé of Joseph Fourier University catalogued computer-generated papers that were published in 30 conference proceedings between 2008 and 2013, the publication reported.

Sixteen appeared in publications by Springer, and more than 100 were published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), based in New York.

The software that made the papers, SCiGen, was designed by MIT to prove that conferences accept meaningless papers (and to "maximise amusement"), and works by stringing random sentences together, *Nature* said.

Both publishers, which were privately informed by Labbé, say that they are now removing the papers, the publication reported.

Oz stars in KL

THE latest in digital lighting and an enhanced culinary presentation was held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre during the recent Australia Day celebrations.

Attended by more than 1000 guests, the special event, aptly named 'Australia Rocks' was a celebration of the country's stunning landscapes and excellence in arts, culture and entertainment.

The Centre's culinary brigade and operations team enhanced the presentation with state-of-the-art banqueting, showcasing an elevated buffet display on a four foot high platform, together with the popular hanging pedestal food stands and Chef Showmanship Stations.

The Culinary team also created a six foot tall ice sculpture of iconic Australian images such as the Sydney Harbour bridge.



NTCB shows star quality



A RELAXING wind-down after a busy day on the AIME 2014 show floor was enjoyed by more than 90 guests who attended the Northern Territory Convention Bureau (NTCB) off-site function, with its seventeen industry partners.

Designed in true NT-style, it was staged at trendy, rooftop bar Campari House, in one of Melbourne's iconic laneways – Hardware Lane.

A funky acoustic duo, which included renowned Australian singer-songwriter Phil Ceberano (pictured centre) provided entertainment and drew out the star qualities of the NTCB's own Scott Lovett (pictured left) as well as Damien Wolff from Great Southern Rail.

Another NT-style highlight was

"Tom" the python, "Marley" and "Chilita", the bearded dragons and "Ruby" the goanna from the Alice Springs Reptile Centre.

NTCB director of business events Scott Lovett advised that the NT would be staging the event again in 2015 and in the meantime, he would be working on his rendition of 'Mustang Sally', just in case another impromptu performance beckons in the future.

Chen for Luxperience

LUXURY brand tradeshow, Luxperience 2014, has appointed Edward Chen to recruit delegates from North Asia.

Targeting markets in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, the appointment comes on the back of the surge in international travel from Asia, and in particular China.

With more than 20 years' experience in destination marketing, Chen has also spent 13 years in leadership positions for the Greater China market for Tourism Australia and Tourism Victoria.

Room with a view

THE deluxe ocean view suite at Peppers Broadbeach has been selected as the room with a view to inspire 22 bloggers from across the globe, as part of a new Tourism & Events Queensland initiative titled '#Room753'.

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Macao's success

DELEGATES attending Celebrate Success, Dream it – Do it! from 25 to 28 Feb have been welcomed to Macao Cotai Strip.

Tupperware Brands Corporation's Asia-Pacific conference attracted 8,700 delegates and was the largest ever held at the integrated resort city, with a combined total of more than 120,000 sqm of MICE space.



The event has required the coordination of all resort operations teams, including banquet operations, which will have dished out 25,000 meals over the three day period.

Conference attendees from 15 countries are accommodated in 5,000 rooms per night including at the Conrad Macao and Holiday Inn and the Four Seasons Hotel Macao.

The event involves the handling of more than 20,000 pieces of luggage, and the scheduling of 30 additional Cotai Water Jet ferry sailings for more than 8,000 arriving passengers.

Like double dutch

AN exclusive partnership between audiovisual provider AVPartners and app developer DoubleDutch is helping break new ground in Australia, by leveraging international MICE trends in digital, social and app technology.

This means events supported by AVPartners can now leverage DoubleDutch's social mobile apps that increase attendee engagement and create a platform for guests and event organisers to communicate with each other.

The DoubleDutch event app allows users to check-in to activities, bookmark favourite events and network with guests.

These features encourage attendees to engage in event content and provide social data for organisers to improve their events in real time.

The app is initially available for events at hotels throughout Australia.

Ben on BEN



Each month Business Manager for inPlace Recruitment, Ben Carnegie, writes his observations from the recruiter's perspective to help job hunters find the perfect job.

Ben has over 15 years working in 5 star hotels and the MICE industry and has worked on some of Australia's biggest events.

The importance of following through

HAVING returned from AIME last week, the real work is now beginning.



After gaining all these valuable leads it is imperative that you follow them up! Following through, whether at an Expo or during your recruitment process is vital to maintaining brand integrity. Companies are always happy once they find the right person to fill their job vacancy but often it's the unsuccessful candidates that get forgotten. Depending on the role and where you advertise, you can get anywhere between 1 and 1000 applications or more. It is important to acknowledge each and every applicant upon receipt of their application and also to advise when they have been unsuccessful. People can handle a NO but they become frustrated with no outcome or acknowledgement of their application. If you stick to this, the 999 unsuccessful candidates have still had a positive experience with your brand and still see your business as having integrity.

Three for two

EASTSAIL has a special charter sale - when two bareboat charters are booked, you get the third for free.

This also applies to bareboat, skippered charters, taken anytime up to October.

If you can only manage one charter then during March and April, they are offering 15% off bareboat and 10% off skippered charters.

Get the low down by contacting EastSail at reception@east sail.com.au.