



## Accor's digital stance

### FOLLOWING

60 minutes with chief executive officer Simon McGrath, a dialogue held



during last week's AccorHotels Showcase, **BEN** questioned the reasoning behind Accor's recent announcement that they are opening up their website to independent hotels.

Explaining the strategy as an international one, McGrath said, "It's about taking a very proactive stance in the digital area.

"The digital form of communication is changing, so not to wait and be disrupted by the changes, a strategic decision was made to play actively in that space," McGrath added.

He said Accor, as one of the largest operators in the world, has a far greater share of the traffic going through to all hotel websites and "that's where size on a digital platform works.

"This means we can provide a curated website with more hotels around the world.

"Taking that even further as our digital strength becomes greater means the share of business to all hotels becomes greater.

"Last year we announced a \$300m investment in the digital area - 60% of that is about systems, strength and building and 40% is about stepping forward into the space rather than responding to the changes that happen around us," he said.

## ICC team now on board

AEG Ogden, the operator of Sydney's new International Convention Centre, today announced the appointment of Erica Blythe as Director of Finance and Administration - the final role to be filled in the landmark venue's key leadership team.

Blythe joins ICC after 16 years with Accor, most recently as NSW regional financial controller.

"We have handpicked a team of experts from business events, hospitality and related industries, building a supportive and dynamic culture that is driven for success," said ceo Geoff Donaghy.

"This is the team tasked with opening what is undoubtedly the single most exciting project under way globally across the events industry today," he enthused.

The group of executives will

now implement ICC Sydney's operational systems, driving the new venue through a series of testing and commissioning events which will culminate in the formal opening in December next year.

"Participating in a city-shaping project that will deliver a legacy for Sydney is a rare and rewarding opportunity...the experience will stay with the team through their careers," Donaghy added.

When ICC Sydney opens it will employ more than 320 full time and up to 1,500 casual staff.

AEG Ogden was also recently announced as the operator of convention centres in Los Angeles and Hawaii.

## SMC green gong

SMC Conference & Function Centre has won the 'Excellence in Sustainability' award from the Sydney region NSW Business Chamber business awards 2015.

The accolade highlighted SMC policies such as ordering only fresh, seasonal local produce for catering and closely monitoring, auditing and donating excess.

SMC director of sales Scott Cooper said green policies were increasingly "something that our clients expect in a venue".

## Urban fundraiser

URBAN Purveyor Group is aiming to raise \$250,000 in partnership with the Starlight Children's Foundation during an upcoming cocktail event.

Showcasing magicians, aerialists, stilt-walkers and a "star-studded list of Sydney Talent," the *Urban Stars* function will take place on Tue 08 Sep at The Argyle in Sydney's Rocks precinct.

Tickets are on sale now for \$175 including entry and a cocktail dinner and beverage package featuring Moët & Chandon champagne and hand-crafted cocktails from the Argyle's team of mixologists.

Book at [urbanpurveyor.com](http://urbanpurveyor.com).

## Starwood Fiji offers

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts has launched several group offers for its properties in Fiji.

The "Get Rewarded" deal at Sheraton Tokoriki is valid for a minimum of 20 room nights, and includes 5% off master billed rooms, 15% off meeting package pricing, in-room wi-fi and a complimentary jet ski ride for up to four VIP guests from the group.

Bookings of 100 room nights will also include a VIP helicopter one way transfer for up to four guests.

There's also a "Planning has its Perks" flyer promoting value adds for Westin Denarau or Sheraton Fiji event bookings in Nov 2015, including a complimentary Sheraton Tokoriki post-conference getaway for the organiser of any event of 200 room nights.

More details on 02 9373 3121.



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## Japan AIME interest

THE Japan National Tourism Organization's Sydney office has announced a request for proposals for the Japan stand and support services at next year's Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME 2016).

"Reputable service providers" are being invited to submit offers to design, build and install the Japan trade stand, plan and execute networking events and provide additional support, with a deadline of 18 Sep 2015.

For more details see the website [jnto.org.au/aime2016](http://jnto.org.au/aime2016).

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## Events Calendar

**BEN's** calendar details events at various venues across Australia.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:info@businesseventsnews.com.au).

### 24-26 AUG

IAPCO EDGE Auckland, Pullman Auckland Hotel; more info at: [iapcoeducation.org/event/edge-auckland](http://iapcoeducation.org/event/edge-auckland)

### 26 AUG

Gold Coast Connect Melbourne, Crown Promenade Melbourne; details: [www.visitgoldcoast.com](http://www.visitgoldcoast.com)

### 31 AUG-3 SEP

PCMA Global Professionals Conference; Melbourne; see: [www.pcma.org](http://www.pcma.org)

### 1-2 SEP

The Event Show; Sydney; for more details email: [info@eventshowsydney.com.au](mailto:info@eventshowsydney.com.au)

### 3-6 SEP

Alice Stampede '15; Alice Springs; for more info go to: [ntconventions.com.au](http://ntconventions.com.au)

### 6-9 SEP

Luxperience; Australian Technology Park, Sydney; see: [www.luxperience.com.au](http://www.luxperience.com.au)

### 9 SEP

Show Me Wellington 2015; TSB Bank Arena and Convention Centre, Wellington; details at: [www.pww.co.nz](http://www.pww.co.nz)

### 10-11 SEP

MICE Asia Pacific Exhibition 2015; Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore; more info at: [www.miceasiaexhibition.com](http://www.miceasiaexhibition.com)

### 21-23 OCT

ITB Asia; Marina Bay Sands, Singapore; details at: [www.itb-asia.com](http://www.itb-asia.com)

### 18 NOV

Pacific Area Incentives & Conferences Expo (PAICE); SKYCITY Auckland Convention Centre; Auckland; more info at: [www.paicexpo.co.nz](http://www.paicexpo.co.nz)

## Capri launches in Brisbane

**GIRLS** on skates, men in head-to-toe lycra and a trapeze artist with giant floating swans heralded in Australia's first Capri by Fraser hotel residences on Fri.

The 150 guests at the official launch of the millennial-focused Brisbane hotel included Qld's Deputy Premier Jackie Trad, Brisbane Marketing ceo John Aitken and Fraser Hospitality Group ceo Choe Peng Sum.

Signalling the Capri launch as a big tick of confidence in Brisbane for now and in the future, Trad declared Capri by Fraser open.

"There is now such a big slice of Singapore in Brisbane and we are grateful that Frasers Hospitality has injected it into this hotel."

The name Capri had been chosen, Mr Choe said, to

evoke an "island of relaxation".

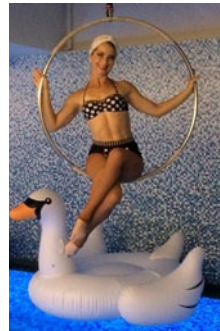
The hotel, a reimagined former Folio bookshop with a book inspired lobby a few blocks from Queen Street Mall, has 239 thoughtfully designed apartments and a meeting room - The Pod - with a capacity for up to 150 and currently a day conference special of \$65pp.

"While the hotel only has one meeting room, all our new Capris will have a lot more meeting space," he said.

"It fits the whole approach we are taking with the brand."

Partnered in the hotel is TV chef Pete Evans whose restaurant and bar Asana serves his "fresh and nutritious" signature style of the all-day dining.

**Pictured** above at the official opening are Fraser chief Choe Peng Sum, deputy premier Jackie Trad, Capri by Fraser gm Mariusz Tymosiewicz, and John Aitken, Brisbane Marketing.



**WANT** to experience Australia Zoo in style?

The Sunshine Coast attraction has launched a VIP Platinum Package, targeting international visitors and others wanting to fully explore this remarkable zoo.

The full day package is offered to groups of a maximum of four people and comes complete with a private photographer who will create a personalised photo collection to take home.

There's also a private caddy and exclusive tour of Australia Zoo, a Big Cat Encounter of choice, morning tea, private animal extravaganza with up to five animals, VIP seats at the Wildlife Warriors Show in the Crocoseum, a tortoise encounter and an echidna experience.

After that you probably need a break for lunch - naturally included - prior to a behind the scenes tour of Australian Wildlife Hospital, a dingo encounter and afternoon tea.

The cost is \$2,000 per adult - but kids up to 14 go free!

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Thanks to HOYTS Corporate Solutions you can win two tickets to see any film at your nearest HOYTS cinema. Valid until November 2015 you have plenty of time to see a film of your choice.

To win, be the first person to answer the question correctly. Send your answers to [comp@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:comp@businesseventsnews.com.au)

According to the HOYTS Corporate Solutions website, what are Private Screenings perfect for?

Congratulations to Thursday's winner, Stephanie Sng from Japan National Tourism Organisation.



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