



Conf centre at BNE

CONSTRUCTION of the \$150 million Brisbane Airport Hotels & Conference Centre has begun.

The centre will be capable of hosting up to 600 delegates across 13 conference and meeting rooms and will bridge two AccorHotels branded hotels, the Pullman Brisbane Airport and the Ibis Brisbane Airport.

"The construction of these two new hotels and Convention Centre will allow Brisbane to attract some of the \$114 million a year in previously missed economic opportunity and drive international exposure of the city," Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk said.

The development includes a mix of 373 suites across the two hotels, as well as 1,735m² of conference, meeting and event space.

Rebrand for ICOMEX

MEXICAN regional MICE event ICOMEX will become part of the global ibtm series of events following its acquisition last year by Reed Travel Exhibitions.

The rebrand will allow the event to benefit from a "greater global presence" as well as provide new opportunities for its network of meeting planners keen to grow business links across the region.

P&O MICE push pays off

P&O Cruises has seen business events inquiry numbers jump 130% year-on-year for the first half of 2015, since launching its push into the sector (**BEN** 25 Feb), according to Peta Torkington, P&O corporate sales manager.

Speaking to **BEN** on board *Pacific Jewel* earlier this week, Torkington said the on-board conference market is a growing niche, particularly in the US.

"About 40% of our breaks are short breaks, it's very unique to have that amount of short-break cruising and that works very well for the conference market, which is why it's been so successful."

P&O is the only cruise line in Australia with a dedicated and locally based MICE team, which has been in operation since Jan.

"If you want to deal with one of our competitors, you have to talk to America," Torkington said, with the P&O fleet allowing flexible conferencing across various on-board venues.

The cruise line has 39 bookings for conferences confirmed for 2015 and 20 bookings plus one charter confirmed for 2016.

Most of the 2016 bookings are for P&O's new ships *Eden* and *Aria*, which are due in Nov and will have a dedicated conferencing space which can be

used for the entire cruise period.

The conference theatre on *Eden* and *Aria* will seat 200 and will have two break out rooms which combined also seat up to 200.

"It's very unique to have, none of the other ships based in Australia have those sort of facilities," Torkington told **BEN**.

The P&O team can organise team building activities, such as scavenger hunts or create value-add packs with incentives and for the four night cruises, they can pre-book private shore excursions.

"It's something a bit different, hotels can get a bit boring and you want to encourage people to come along and participate.

"Also, because you're on a cruise ship, people can't kind of disappear," Torkington added.

Event Show final call

REGISTRATIONS are in the final stages for MEA's The Event Show in Sydney next week.

Newly added to the lineup of guest speakers is Mumbrella content director Tim Burrowes, who will speak about "Making it up as we go along".

Presentations will look at using LinkedIn and social media as well as a session from Fairfax Media.

The show at Randwick Racecourse opens at 8.30am Tue-
www.eventsshowsydney.com.au.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news and the latest **BEN** Christmas Venue Guide on **page three**.



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Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Darling Harbour is less than 12 months away from launching Sydney's most exciting hotel and convention venue. The hotel will boast 4,800spm of convention, meeting and event space and will add 222 new guest rooms to its current portfolio, bringing the total number of rooms to 905 to be the largest hotel in Australia.

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Name the three NSW Hoyts Cinema locations that start with a 'W'.

Congratulations to Monday's winner, Allana Frisken from ID Events Australia.



business events news

27th August 2015

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Raising the bar showcase

ABOUT 300 Sydney event & conference planners were invited late last week to view examples at work of the best in event planning



technology, pyro, lighting & food. The "Event Inception" show was hosted by Australian Technology Park in conjunction with Decorative Events & Exhibitions. Venue representatives splashed out on promoting the best of the possibilities available incl room design, decor, technical support, wine, audio, entertainment & style. Guests were divided into

three groups to experience three "mini restaurants" exhibiting wares from premium event caterers. "Event

Inception was catered with amazing food thanks to some incredible new techniques, and it was also 'food for thought' on how things can be done," Australian Technology Park director of sales and marketing Ruby Chronis said.

One of the room layout exhibits is **pictured** above.

Crackback gets fit

CONFERENCE delegates at Lake Crackback Resort & Spa will have access to a range of outdoor activities and fitness programs after the resort added personal trainer Lee Campbell to its team of fitness ambassadors.

A variety of team building tasks & challenges including mountain biking, trail running & bush walks can be added to daily schedules.

AACB disappointed

THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux has criticised the Productivity Commission for its lack of focus on the business events sector in a draft report.

The 'Barriers to Growth in Service Exports' report identified tourism as Australia's leading service export sector.

AACB executive director Andrew Hiebl said the report's focus solely on overnight expenditure fails to recognise the broader importance of the visitor economy, while business events offer strategic tools for attracting trade & talent.

Gray's Say

Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.



THE AGE-OLD STORY

WE'VE all been there. Pulled out all the stops to meet a client's deadline and then waited...and waited...and waited. The word 'urgent' is probably one of the most misused in the English language. Everything seems to be urgent - particularly when someone wants something - but it's rarely reflected in the responses that are forthcoming.

Sometimes there are no responses! I can recall, in the dim and distant past, that prospective clients would actually write (no email in those days) or sometimes even telephone and tell you if an application wasn't successful. Nowadays it seems that the art of communication has been irreparably damaged if not lost altogether.

And yet communication is the very essence of what PCOs and Incentive Practitioners do, or should do.

Today software exists in both the meetings and incentives industries to alleviate any communication problems. Whether it's cloud-based or stand-alone software a lot of what the modern-day PCO or Incentive Practitioner has to do can be done almost at the touch of a button. This should leave plenty of time for creative and innovative thought about the project but does it happen?

How do we make conferences more effective and innovative in terms of the design of these events? Ed Bernacki, an innovations expert, suggests we do this by redefining what we do and how we do it. "From a perspective of results and innovation, the most practical definition is that people learn new things at a conference, convert these into ideas for their future success, and then act on these ideas after the event. This is a challenging definition as it forces a major rethink

of all elements of the design of a conference".

Ed goes on to say "This leads to many ideas for the design of a conference that focus on the experience people would have at a conference. However this is not enough to prompt action after a conference. For this reason, our thinking must focus on the relationship people have before the event and after the event".

When a client is asked to define the learning objectives of the event the most usual response is to provide details of a theme. But a theme is not an objective. The process for designing more effective conferences starts by recognising that all events have two different planning priorities: a logistics strategy, includes the planning details to host the event, and a learning strategy that defines why the event is being held, what results are crucial for participants, and how they will be achieved.

Incentives require much the same process but this is usually more clearly defined, particularly in the case of sales incentive programmes where the objective is often defined in terms of monetary or percentage increases.

The communication between parties to a sales pitch or an RFP surely must contain an element of trust - trust that the word 'urgent' truly means 'requiring immediate action' and trust that if a proposal, application or whatever else is being solicited does not meet the requirements then the submitting person or company is advised of it.

Peter Gray can be contacted on peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net



IT'S an exhibition organiser's worst nightmare.

A 12 year old Taiwanese boy has tripped and fallen in front of a \$1.5 million masterpiece and punched a hole in the canvas.

The painting, "Flowers" by Italian master Paolo Porpora, is currently on show in Taipei as part of an exhibit showcasing works influenced by Leonardo da Vinci.

According to the curator of the show, David Sun, "it was such an unusual accident.

"The boy was listening to the guide and wasn't looking where he was going, and tripped and smashed a hole in the artwork".

However fortunately an art appraiser from Italy was on hand, and after contacting the collector the painting was repaired on site.

"It's back on display already," Sun confirmed, with the extremely apologetic boy not facing any punishment.

Business Events News is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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Christmas Venue Guide

Looking for a Christmas venue or staff celebration?

Business Events News guide to 2015/16 Christmas venues is the place to showcase!

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