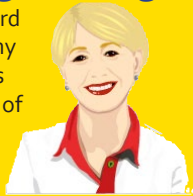




Throwing some light

SO many award nights, so many award winners - all deserving of individual recognition and praise, so may we say, "congratulations, well done" to all those who win these well-deserved prizes at major industry events. We tend to run a complete award listing from events such as the National MEA and AIME Awards and appreciate that winning hotels, venues; bureaus and service providers would like to see reports of their individual wins and photos in **BEN**.



However, until we create the **BEN** glittering prizes newsletter with suitably sponsored advertising, please forgive us for not running your particular triumph.

Mind you, there are exceptions and that may be you have a compelling back-story to inspire or something of particular interest to our readers, so nil desperandum.

MEANWHILE, following attempts to 'Paint the Town Red' during Vivid **BEN** joined in the world of bloggers, instagram photographers, tweeters and social media types at a function hosted by lighting master Iain Reed in the private dining room of Shangri-La Sydney. It became clear why these mainly young and techno savvy individuals are being invited by tourism bodies to put their spin on all things tourism and get paid for it too. In all, it was a pretty lively, engaging and wholly eye-opening evening that continued on into the hotel's Blu Bar on 36, where the all encompassing view of Vivid's lighting is as magical as you are likely to get anywhere in the city.

Innovation at its best

AUSTRALIAN businesses will access the best thinking, learning and ideas at the SW/TCH three day innovation festival to be held in Sydney from 27-29 August.

It's all about thinking, with the festival aiming to "facilitate collaboration across industries and expertise to create innovation for market-share gain".

Decision makers will descend on Sydney's Cockatoo Island for the event which will encourage cross-pollination of ideas across different business sectors.

Leading academics will provide best-practice content while sessions led by "leading disruptors" will get delegates to

solve big business challenges.

Day one will provide input on how ideas can be transformed into commercial reality while the second and third days, led by Playcamp, will focus on solving key issues facing eight Australian industry leading businesses.

The solutions will be presented to a line-up of 24 judges, with the last team standing taking home "kudos and a soon to be revealed money-can't buy experience".

SW/TCH has been created by Silicon Valley veteran Mark Zawacki, and aims to "shine a light on and create the new future for Australian corporates," he said.

See www.switchfest.org.

Taking control a 'Vivid' concept

FIND your inner artist and 'Paint the Town Red' - or a combination of blue, yellow and pink.

Add random elements like stripes and waves - whatever your artistic instinct desires - something you can do it at this year's Vivid Festival in Sydney.

It's all the brainchild of lighting artist and event maestro Iain Reed (**pictured**) and his crew who have handed over colour control of twelve city buildings around Circular Quay's dress circle to the public, via an interactive touch screen set up near the Overseas Passenger Terminal.

Reed's head spinning roster has seen him play an integral role in virtually every major public event over the past decade or two including the infamous Cointreau Balls and the installation of the 'O' for Oprah on the occasion of



her Australian visit.

For Vivid 2015 it also included lighting the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Cenotaph in Martin Place, the cranes at Lend Lease's Darling Harbour construction site, and the Chatswood Concourse together with Ample Projects.

"When we first lit the Bridge two years ago it took us a month to install and a lot of the work had to be performed at night," says Reed.

"This time around it took just two weeks; we know her secret nooks and crannies now and it was a lot easier and quicker."

Buyers to explore NZ

SOME 60 Australian hosted buyers are joining regional familiarisation tours of New Zealand prior to CINZ MEETINGS 2015, while another twelve are extending their stay for further site visits.

Organised by the CINZ Australia team, MEETINGS is being held at Auckland's ASB Showgrounds, 10-11 June with tours designed to match buyers' specific needs with regions of their choice.

"Last year's pre-MEETINGS familiarisation programme was such a huge success we have expanded to seven regions in 2015," says Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) chief executive Sue Sullivan.

On the itinerary visitors will be heading to Hamilton and Waikato, Rotorua, Lake Taupo, Wellington, Christchurch and Canterbury, Dunedin and Queenstown. They also have two tour options in MEETINGS' host city on 9 June, and a dinner at Auckland War Memorial Museum, both organised by Auckland Convention Bureau.



HOW about this for a reward? A dog in China has more bling than the average person - let alone pooch!

The pup's owner splashed out, by purchasing two gold Apple watches for his pet.

Wang Sicong, son of Chinese property mogul Wang Jianlin, took to Chinese social media to show off his pooch's trinkets.

The new "doggy jewels" have attracted attention, with over 700,00 views cited on the net.

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