



Expo Direct expands

EXPO Direct has relocated its Sydney premises to Marrickville, with an official opening to take place early next month.

CEO Eden Fridman said the company had outgrown its previous location quickly, with Expo Direct looking forward to "continued expansion in 2016.

"Having a larger site will make it much easier to service our clients in NSW, Canberra, Queensland and Victoria," he said.

As well as boasting a larger warehouse and production space, the new facility also features a permanent "Octanorm" training area, supported by Octanorm Australia.

There's also the latest Test & Tag equipment, as part of the firm's focus on safety, best practice and ongoing staff development.

Fridman said he welcomed the opportunity to showcase the Expo Direct offering to event organisers and clients - 1300 397 634.

Staging Connections sold

US events giant Freeman has been confirmed as the new owner of the Staging Connections Group (**BEN** breaking news), with the Freeman offer clearly trumping a previously announced deal with PSAV (**BEN** 15 Jun).

It's expected to be business as usual for Staging Connections and its various offshoots including Exhibitions & Trade Fairs, with Freeman confirming the operation will retain its branding.

Staging Connections Group is now part of Freeman's audio visual division, with shareholders approving the takeover late last month prior to Federal Court approval on 01 Oct.

"There are a lot of synergies between the Staging Connections Group culture and that of Freeman, particularly our customer-centric approach to event delivery," said Staging Connections md Tony

Chamberlain.

"We're confident that we will fit together seamlessly," he said.

Freeman Audio Visual president Ken Sanders said he was thrilled to have Chamberlain as a partner.

"We've been working with Staging Connections over the years and have been impressed by their people and their culture.

"There couldn't be a better fit for Freeman as we continue to expand into global markets."

The move gives Freeman an immediate presence in Australia, New Zealand, China, Singapore and Fiji via Staging Connections' 15 offices and almost 700 employees across the Asia-Pacific region.

"As our clients are expanding globally, they want the same level of Freeman quality, service, technology and support in markets around the world," said Freeman ceo Joe Popolo.

Today's issue of **BEN**

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

New Pacific World managing director

SINGAPORE-BASED Selina Chavry has been named as the new global managing director for Pacific World.

Previously regional director, Asia for the organisation, Chavry has had an extensive career in the business events sector in London, Sydney and Singapore.

The promotion comes as Pacific World continues its global expansion, with North Europe, the Mediterranean, India and China on the agenda along with Latin America (**BEN** Mon).

At the same time, Herve Joseph-Antoine has become Pacific World chairman.

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business events news

22nd October 2015



crumbs!

EVENT planners and decorators are likely to be intrigued at the theming of a new cafe which has launched in Tokyo this week.

The Harajuki Cafe Sunday Jam has redecorated to reflect all things "My Little Pony" - and no, it's not targeting children but rather grown-up aficionados of the popular toy range.

There are plenty of rainbows and soft toys, while food items (pictured) reflect the theme - and to top it off you can even meet a real life miniature Shetland Pony while you wait for your meal.

There's My Little Pony memorabilia for sale too - but you'll have to be quick to experience it because the pop-up pony theme only runs until the end of next month.



Nine travel summits

THE Association of Corporate Travel Executives will team up with the CAPA Centre for Aviation to host nine Corporate Travel Summits in Australasia next year.

To be held in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Auckland, it's the most ambitious joint educational program ACTE and CAPA will have offered in their three year alliance.

The organisations said other 2016 events were also yet to be announced, with all of the sessions geared to "senior executives across Australasia's corporate travel community".

Luxperience feedback

THE organisers of this year's Luxperience show say feedback from participants indicates they expect to transact almost \$100m worth of business from meetings conducted during the event.

90% said they expected to take part again next year, while 95% will recommend involvement to their colleagues, according to the results of a post-show survey released this week.

85% of buyers in attendance viewed Luxperience as the place to learn what's new in the exclusive and experiential travel arena, while 98% of those who took part in the famil program would be recommending the products experienced to clients.

Luxperience 2016 will continue to feature the show's popular networking events including the Thought Leaders Program and Gala Dinner & Awards night.

The show will again take place at Sydney's Australian Technology Park, from 18-21 Sep 2016.

DMS Gulf Dunes split

DUBAI-BASED Gulf Dunes and DMS Destination Management Services have announced they will end their partnership after a decade-long relationship.

Effective 30 Sep 2015 Gulf Dunes UAE was no longer represented by DMS in Australia and New Zealand.

"DMS has been a great support to Gulf Dunes for a long time, and the time has come for both parties to move on to take our business forward," said Gulf Dunes gm Oussama Bou Kamel.

The company said it was currently reviewing its options for Australia/NZ, and would advise the industry as soon as a new rep had been appointed.



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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.



ARE YOU 'GAME'?

AS WELL as designing incentive programmes I am often challenged to find travel rewards that offer something different to those that achieve or exceed targets. So where do I turn for inspiration?

Many of the on-line incentive and travel magazines offer suggestions as do Conde Nast Traveller, Trip Adviser and similar sites. But while there are many valuable suggestions most of these sources fail to mention how the destinations cope with the 'little things' that can make or break an incentive travel reward.

Indeed, how many hotels, airlines, DMCs actually know what is really expected of them when hosting an incentive reward group? That's a subject for another column.

I recently returned from a trip to South Africa, Zambia and Botswana and I was very impressed by what I found. The last time I was in South Africa was twenty years ago and that trip was confined to Cape Town and Sun City, then reckoned to be all that was needed on a trip to the south of the African continent. That was probably far from the truth then and it certainly is today.

There are several things that stand out as exceptional on the trip but one of them is that no matter how far we were into the bush it was always possible to obtain an telephone and internet connection and usually 4G. Even on the Blue Train that runs between Pretoria and Cape Town Vodacom and WiFi travelled with us! Australia can't manage that in parts of Victoria let alone in the wilds of the bush! In Zambia and Botswana the story was the same - an internet signal no matter where we were; in

hotels, bush camps, on game drives or sunset cruises.

Another notable fact is the way in which everyone made an effort to be as helpful as possible. Nothing was too much trouble. And although South Africans are themselves finding that eating out is becoming expensive, compared to what we pay in Australia restaurants are very reasonable. Service levels just about everywhere were very high. The one exception was Sun City. It was kitsch twenty years ago; it's even more so now.

But the one sight that has almost everyone gasping at it's sheer beauty is Victoria Falls. From a distance the spray cloud (which rises to almost twice the height of the falls itself) looks like a bush fire but even at this time of the year when the great Zambezi River is reduced to about half its normal capacity the Victoria Falls should not be missed.

Almost everyone who travels to South Africa wants to experience a game drive and to see the 'big five' (lion, leopard, hippo, rhino and elephant). Game lodges abound and many of them offer considerable luxury as well as the big five experience.

Incentive travel rewards are often described as fulfilling dreams and that's certainly something that South Africa can do no matter what those dreams are.

Peter Gray is an independent, Accredited Incentive Practitioner and motivation consultant. He can be contacted at peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net



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Christmas Venue Guide

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