



EDITOR: BONNIE TAI



TOWER FOR DARLING HARBOUR

PLANS for another major redevelopment at Darling Harbour have been revealed, this time focussed on the Cockle Bay Wharf precinct facing the new International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney).



An application lodged with the NSW Department of Planning shows a proposal for a 235m tower and retail complex on the city side of the bay, featuring restaurants, bars, shopping outlets and public spaces on an open rooftop (pictured).

The existing complex, which was opened in 1998 and includes the Dockside events venue, would be demolished under the proposal.

A spokesperson for the Dockside Group told *Business Events News* it was too early to say what the impact of the proposal would be, however the venue would remain open in the medium term.

"It is business as usual for Dockside and we are excited to see what the future holds," the spokesperson said.

The tower planning

application is now open for public comment and says the development would "vastly improve" pedestrian access and connectivity with several neighbouring areas of the city.

It includes a land bridge to cover the existing Western Distributor motorway and link the site to the western CBD.

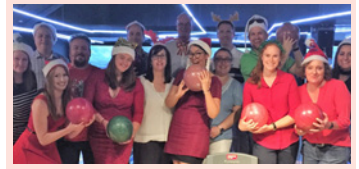
The latest proposal joins other projects around Darling Harbour in planning or under construction, including a luxury hotel for the former IMAX theatre site, a new Sofitel tower alongside ICC Sydney, a high-rise Ritz-Carlton at The Star Sydney and James Packer's Crown Sydney at Barangaroo.

BEN 2016 wraps up

WELCOME to the very last edition of *Business Events News* for 2016.

The team here will be taking a well deserved break over the holiday period, with **BEN** set to return to your inboxes from 05 Jan.

Thank you for all your support this year and we wish everybody a safe and happy Christmas.



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

AIME Uncover Melbourne launch

THE Melbourne Convention Bureau has launched a new pre-trade show program for buyers attending AIME next year.

Dubbed Uncover Melbourne, the two-day event takes place on 19-20 Feb has been designed to showcase Melbourne's business events capacity.

Incorporating five distinct experiences, day one includes new city touring and concludes with *Uncover Melbourne: The Magic of Flemington*, a welcome function presented in partnership with Business Events Australia.

The second day starts with *Uncover Melbourne: The Charm of the Yarra* and includes a riverside breakfast event before delegates head to *Melbourne Edge - Event Series* where they will be led on a topical discussion that involves the industry's future trends, technology and people.

AIME 25th Anniversary Welcome Event is the last of the series and will commemorate the milestone year.

Tickets are available by **CLICKING HERE**.

AIME takes place on 21-22 Feb at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

NEW APPOINTMENT

TOURISM New Zealand has appointed Stephen England-Hall (pictured) to the position of chief executive.

Based in Auckland, he commences the role from Apr next year.

England-Hall was formerly the chief executive at Loyalty New Zealand and prior to that ceo of Razorfish in London.



NSW Central Coast Showcase

NEW South Wales-based PCOs and executive assistants are being invited to the NSW Central Coast Showcase and Cocktail Party on 15 Feb.

Held at the Swissotel Market Street in Sydney, the interactive event aims to show attendees that the Central Coast is "anything but business as usual".

All visitors will be interested into the draw to win one of a number of destination prizes - **CLICK HERE** to RSVP.



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

Kiwi famil gets instant results



THREE business leads were generated for Australia following Business Events Australia's New Zealand educational hosted earlier this month.

Held in conjunction with Business Events Gold Coast, Elements of Byron and Virgin Australia, the Kiwi delegation (**pictured**) visited Byron Bay and the Gold Coast where they were given the opportunity to try new products and experiences and learn more about Australia's unique MICE offerings.



■ **A MEAT** and potato pie has journeyed out to where no pastry has ever gone before - to space.

Launched last week to celebrate the beginning of the World Pie Eating Championships in the UK, the pie was attached to a weather balloon and reached 100,000 feet.

The journey, which was filmed, lasted about three hours before it crashed back down to earth.

It was later taken to be tested to see if its molecular structure had changed.

Givergy fundraiser

EVENT technology specialists Givergy partnered with Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation for its Diamond Event fundraiser.

Forty Givergy fundraising tablets were set up as bidding stations during the function, giving guests easy access to the silent auction, with details pre-loaded in advance.

After each bid, the guest's name and amount of the bid was projected on the leaderboard screens.

A total of \$525,000 was raised overall for the Hospital's Excellence in Emergency program.

It's that time of year again...

...AND I'm not referring to Christmas or whatever other festival you may celebrate around this time. Frequently referred to as 'the silly season', this year seemed sillier than ever. It's the time when suppliers dust off age-old mailing lists and decide to tell the world that they have amazing, unbelievable, never-to-be-repeated (except they are, fairly frequently!) offers which are available - exclusively - to the recipient of their unwanted and often downright annoying emails or even text messages.

I have suddenly heard from suppliers I have never used before, nor am I likely to, and not only do they thank me for my previous business (which never happened) but they infer that they are fully aware that my clients will need their services in the future. In their dreams!

Hotels and destinations seem to make up the majority of these unwanted communications but they are doing themselves a disservice. Not only do I have a very effective spam filter on my laptop but my ISP also filters out the most blatant rubbish before it even reaches me (I know this because I check this spam filter too). Once on one of these spam databases suppliers' communications will not reach me and so, even if they suddenly start doing something that may be useful to me or my clients, they are shut out.

That this traffic has increased this year is, I think, reflective of the way the meetings and incentives industries are heading, or to be more precise, the way many of the on-line event management software producers would like us to go. It doesn't impress me nor does it impress many of my industry colleagues who also resent having their time taken up by dealing with unsolicited communications.

That many incentive companies and meetings/event managers now rely upon recommendations not from professional colleagues but from event management software companies is not doing our industry any good. It's not what our clients are paying for...unless yours happens to be one of the 'pile it high, sell it cheap' companies which are now evident in the marketplace. Low margins (and I mean very low margins) mean that revenue has to come either from illegal hidden commissions or by taking on a large number of client projects at once with the inevitable result that service - real service - suffers.

With the advent of AirBNB and hotel consolidation web sites everyone thinks they can be an incentive practitioner or conference organiser. The reality is, as we all know, that it takes a lot more than buying cheap hotel rooms or airfares to make an event the success our clients demand.

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