



## Cooperation increases

**CONFERENCE** organisers are targeting closer ties with destination marketing organisations due to a sharp rise in venue costs, according to a survey conducted in North America in Nov last year.

Fulcrum Marketing polled about 400 planners on how the rising cost of large conferences will impact their relationships with destination marketers, with key selling points including the availability of financial incentives.

Respondents also said they expected destinations to help boost meeting attendance.

More than 30% of the business events organised by those polled were placed outside the USA, with stable funding, economic partnerships and a positive local perception of meetings cited as factors in choosing a destination, along with local infrastructure.

The survey also found the internet was the most popular source of destination info.

**CLICK HERE** for the summary.

## Peppers to Melbourne

**MANTRA** Group last week opened the doors of the new Peppers Docklands, bringing the upscale Peppers brand to the Melbourne CBD for the first time.

The 5-star property features direct access to the Etihad Stadium concourse, giving guests convenient entry to events staged there throughout the year.

## Sunshine Coast to take off

**QUEENSLAND'S** Sunshine Coast is gearing up for a major boost in the business events market this year with Qantas starting a new business-oriented flight schedule into Maroochydore next month.

Visitor traffic passing through the Sunshine Coast airport is already on the rise, with official stats showing there was 19% more passenger traffic in 2015 than the year prior.

Visit Sunshine Coast ceo Simon Ambrose told **Business Events News** there were clear reasons for this spike in traffic, with the Qantas resumption complementing summer services from Air New Zealand and increased Virgin and Jetstar domestic services during the year.

Another factor launching the Sunshine Coast into a new era is the extension of the Sunshine Coast Airport runway which Ambrose hopes will be approved this year to be underway by 2017.

"This will be a game-changer as it will allow us to welcome larger aircraft with greater capacity," he told media on Fri.

Other projects set to transform the region over the next decade include the opening of Sunshine Coast University Hospital and Kawana Health Campus, which is expected to be one of the largest medical precincts in the country and has already led the opening of the new Best Western Plus at



Kawana Waters.

The Maroochydore City Centre will also be redone and a vast residential area in South Caloundra will be developed.

"This evolution will bring new hotels, new tourism infrastructure, more events and more services," he said.

"There is a records events schedule in place this year".

Ambrose said the region was becoming "dynamic and balanced".

"It might be all about sunshine and coast for tourists, but under the surface it has a lot more happening to make it sustainable."

The area will also have a record cruise schedule calling into Mooloolaba in 2016.

The region was only added as a destination on cruise schedules a year ago, but this year the coast will welcome 10 cruise ships and over 17,000 passengers.

Visit Sunshine Coast ceo Simon Ambrose is **pictured** with Leo Seaton from Tourism Australia.

## Grant memorial

**ORGANISERS** of the memorial service for the late David Grant (**BEN** Thu) have advised that it is an invitation-only event.

We apologise for any confusion.

## Macao takes AIME

**THE** Venetian Macao has confirmed its participation at next month's Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo, taking place in Melbourne 23-24 Feb.

At AIME, the flagship hotel of Sands Resorts Cotai Strip will showcase the recently launched "Macao Meetings with More" package with a host of benefits for conference organisers.

## ADL Casino go ahead

**ADELAIDE** Casino's \$300 million transformation has been approved by South Australia's Development Assessment Commission (DAC).

An 80-room hotel, premium gaming spaces and additional restaurants have been proposed.

SKYCITY Entertainment Group chief executive Nigel Morrison says the new offering will help the state attract a bigger share of high-value international visitors.

"SKYCITY is committed to developing a world-class, integrated entertainment destination in Adelaide, attracting both international and domestic visitors," Morrison said.

Construction is slated to commence by mid-year.

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# business events news

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## Sustainable Darwin

**DARWIN** Convention Centre has attained the Bronze Benchmarking Standard through EarthCheck, an environmental management group for the travel and tourism industry.

The venue's general manager Janet Hamilton said the achievement showed their commitment to being a sustainable events venue.

## TD partners with TIE

**TRAVEL** Daily Group is the official media partner for the Travel Industry Exhibition (TIE).

*Travel Daily* publisher Bruce Piper said he was "thrilled" to see the development of TIE and was particularly pleased the show would take place in both Melbourne and Sydney this year.

"The show is going from strength to strength & we are so pleased to be the official media partner, with our publications including *Travel Daily*, *travelBulletin*, *Cruise Weekly* and *Business Events News* all well-placed to provide up-to-the-minute coverage for exhibitors & participants," he said.

The Melbourne show will be held at Peninsula, Docklands on Mon and Tue 11-12 Jul, with the Sydney event a week later at Luna Park on 18-19 Jul.

For more information, see [travelindustryexpo.com.au](http://travelindustryexpo.com.au).

## Sydney's new function centre

**AN EXCITING** new function centre, which forms part of the existing Kansas City Shuffle cafe, is set to open in The Rocks, Sydney next month.

Located in the former Cadbury Chocolate factory, the venue can cater for about 200 people.

Bookings have already been taken for weddings and company events later this year.

The interior combines new furnishings with some original and vintage fixtures for an edgy feel.

The style of food served is simple, fresh and extremely well-executed share plates with everything made in-house and from scratch by head chef Kayne Mordini.

## Four Points Sydney exec lounge



**THE NSW** Govt has handed down its recommendation for the construction of an executive lounge and public bar at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, Sydney.

The facility will be constructed on the rooftop of the property's northern tower, replacing the existing lounge bar and outdoor roof garden on level 11.

Spread across two levels, the \$11.9m development has a

capacity of 200 persons, with the lower level lounge available for premium guests only, providing limited food & beverage services.

Level 12 Rooftop bar deck will be publicly accessible, open 24/7.

In Nov, NSW Planning said the proposal is "generally consistent with strategic planning objectives of *A Plan for Growing Sydney* and Sydney Councils' *Sustainable Sydney 2030*" strategy.



**CAN'T** afford a ticket to Las Vegas but would love to check out the National Museum of Organised Crime and Law Enforcement? Soon you won't even need a passport to tour this popular landmark.

How, you ask? It's all thanks to the 'Moe-Bot' - a telepresence robot, enabling guests to tour the museum via computer screen or mobile device.

When a user logs onto the system their face will appear on Moe-Bot's screen, which is mounted on a mobile stand.

Moe-Bot will take you on a virtual tour along with a museum guide who joins the journey to answer any questions, point out must-see displays and ensure each tour experience is interactive and personalised.

Pretty nifty huh?

**Pictured** A museum guide interacts with a virtual visitor at the MOB Museum.



## Predictions for event trends in 2016

**WISH** you knew what was around the corner for event planning? The next big thing to captivate your guests?

While there is no magic ball to tell us the future, we can offer some insight into what lies ahead in the events industry, based on what is happening around the world and emerging technologies.

Some of my predictions for event trends in 2016 are:

An increased use of event apps - while event apps aren't new technology, they have been building momentum and clients have seen the overwhelming benefit of their use with attendees.

Virtual reality & augmented reality - this includes the use of 360 degree video and photos for mobile devices; really wowing attendees!

iBeacon technology and wearables - smart watches, wrist bands, name badges, smart goggles/glasses and lanyards will become a bigger part of events.

Bespoke pop-up concept events - this refers to customised events created for unique locations.

"Experience" based events - creating unique memorable experiences to engage audiences will become more popular this year.

A shift to mobile devices instead of laptops - this makes event communication much more portable and accessible.

Periscope app - this app is a live streaming video platform for mobile devices and integrates with social media platforms such as Twitter.

LED video wall panels - again not new technology, however we will see an increased demand in LED video wall panels for screen content and virtual backdrop effects.

*Matt Taylor is the partner at Crown Perth with AVPartners, which creates integrated event experiences through combining state of the art audiovisual technology, unrivalled expertise and a highly tailored approach.*

[www.avpartners.com](http://www.avpartners.com)



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