



DINING out alone? Want some free food? We've become privy to a strategy for potentially achieving this.

It's not foolproof but there's evidence it works: ask for a table for two and look sad as you eat your meal alone.

Twitter user Kyle Balding tested the theory recently with great success.

Dubbed #OperationFreeFood he updated his twitter followers on each stage of his project as he made the wait staff feel awkward.

From staging fake calls with "Jaime" who hasn't shown up for their "date" to dropping hints like untouched drinks on the table across from him and role playing enough to convince the waiters.

"So much time has passed that now my waiter isn't making eye contact with me, and is avoiding my table," tweeted.

He's so convincing the waiter even leans in to check he's ok.

When the meal is over a bill does not appear on his table #sympathyvote.

Would you test the theory?



Roof milestone for ICC

SYDNEY'S new \$1.5 billion International Convention Centre (ICC Sydney) is still on track for its Dec opening date after reaching a "major milestone" this week with its roof installation.

NSW Premier Mike Baird and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance attended the recent lift of the ICC's roof.

"ICC Sydney is making great progress – it will truly cement Sydney as the number one place to live, work and do business, and retain its rightful place on the international stage," Mr Baird said in an official statement.

International interest in the venue continues to build with close to 90 international conventions and exhibitions already secured nine months ahead of the opening.

Some of the events locked in so far include the Reed Gift Fair and the Sydney International Boat

Show.

ICC Sydney CEO Geoff Donaghy said next year's exhibition season would open the Reed Gift Fair which will "take up all halls across the centre, and is expected to attract 500 exhibitors, 20,000 buyers and see millions of dollars transact as a result".

Premier Baird predicts new events centre will inject \$200 million annually into the New South Wales economy.

For the latest updates on the project see www.iccsydney.com.

Asian aviation in Bris

BRISBANE has been selected to play host to major aviation conference, Routes Asia 2018.

The event will be held between 18-20 Mar 2018 at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and is expected to attract over 1000 delegates from major international airlines, airports and the tourism industry.

Queensland's Minister for Tourism and Major Events Kate Jones said the event should inject more than \$1.8 million into the local economy while "showcasing the state's destinations and visitor experiences".

"Routes Asia 2018 supports our government's efforts to grow tourism by improving access for international students and attracting further Asian investment, conventions and business events," she said.

This builds on the state's reputation as an events destination.

ASM deals

AUSTRALIAN Sports Marketing (ASM) is offering "the best in event hospitality" in the ASM Podium Club during the upcoming Formula 1 Grand Prix in Melbourne from 17-20 Mar.

Places are limited with three, two and one day packages available - see **page 3**.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news, plus plus full pages from: (*click*)

- Australian Sports Marketing
- AA Appointments

Labor \$5m boost

IF CHOSEN in next year's state election the Western Australia Labor government promises to invest \$5 million annually in the Perth Convention Bureau.

Leader of WA's Labor party Mark McGowan said business events were one of the "highest yielding tourism segments" and provided five to six times the expenditure per night than an average domestic or international visitor.

Tourism Council WA also estimates the Labor initiative would create 340 new jobs in the state and maintain a total of 1,260 jobs each year.

"It makes smart economic sense to invest in areas that have a high return on investment like the Perth Convention Bureau to create more local jobs for Western Australians," McGowan said.

According to McGowan the Liberals has cut \$5.3 million from the Perth Convention Bureau budget over the next three years which would result in a loss of \$85.4million in direct delegate expenditure and 715 local jobs.

Open Territory prog

THE Northern Territory Govt's Open Territory program of events launched this morning at the Darwin Convention Centre.

Over over 100 events will be held from Mar-May in a move to boost local business during the shoulder season.

Events are grouped under five key themes: Business through; Technology and Communication; Sport; Food & Agribusiness; Trade & Investment and through Arts & Culture - for more **CLICK HERE**.

Swan Valley Pavilion

THE Vines Resort & Country Club has unveiled its new purpose-built garden structure - function area with space for up to 100 guests, cocktail style.

The Pavilion adds to The Barrett Lennard Room, The Boardroom, Samuel Copley and Cabernet function rooms, along with the Resort's dining options.

To enquire about events email dos@vines.com.au.

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business events news

10th March 2016

PCO Japanese immersion



FIVE professional conference organisers (PCOs) from Australia and New Zealand were invited to experience Japan as an ideal destination for business events on a six-day familiarisation trip hosted by Japan National Tourism Organization.

The trip started in the buzzing capital of Tokyo, where the participants stayed at the luxurious Conrad Tokyo, featuring panoramic views of Tokyo Bay. Highlights in Tokyo included a taiko drumming experience in Asakusa and sushi-making at Tsukiji Fish Market.

The group went to the popular Robot Restaurant in Shinjuku, among other site inspections.

Heading to Odawara, in the foothills of the hot spring region Hakone the group rode the bullet train for the first time.

They were impressed by the facilities at the Hilton Odawara Resort & Spa including tennis courts, a karaoke room and even a bowling alley.

Their next stop was Kyoto, Japan's cultural and traditional heart.

Here the group enjoyed

traditional activities like origami, calligraphy and an up-close maiko (apprentice geisha) experience.

The PCOs were treated to Japanese cuisine, and impressed by the variety on offer.

Pictured above group members Josie Hough, David Dymott, Jayson Frazer, Victoria Wales, Michael Walker, Jenna Doumit and Yuko Hashimoto drumming in Asakusa.

Kurrawa May 2016

THE new \$1 million space for outdoor events on the Gold Coast, Kurrawa Terrace, is on track to open this May.

Funded by the City of Gold Coast & the Queensland State Gov't it will play host to the Australian Tourism Exchange event from 15-19 May.

The terrace can cater for full event infrastructure and fit 500 standing guests and 250 seated.

To celebrate the opening, a beach side event packages worth \$75,000 is up for grabs for a meeting of conference group.

To be in the running for the prize **CLICK HERE**.



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conference FOCUS GENEration Change

bringing events into focus

Director of Conference Focus, Max Turpin is sharing his insights on a range of topics with a regular column in **BEN**. Topics will include new generation events and making events effective and valuable.

2016 Sample Plate – A Taste of The GFC?

THE financial markets this year have been volatile to say the least. When I started writing this in early February, the ASX had fallen almost 10%. Putting that loss into monetary terms, the Aussie stock market had lost well over 100 billion dollars. This carnage wasn't confined to Australia. Major markets all over the world had suffered similar losses if not more. They have all bounced back since to some degree. However, I think volatility, uncertainty and fear will persist throughout 2016. What does this mean for meetings and events?

Meetings and events are one of the first things that suffer during an economic downturn and when business confidence is low. They are one of the first things put under the spotlight and led away to the guillotine. Why? The reasons are simple – many senior executives view events as both discretionary (non-essential) and as a pure cost (non-revenue generating). Unless an event is absolutely necessary, it is totally exposed and vulnerable to being cut. I won't start on the topics of budget constraint, cost cutting and price negotiations since this has been prevalent for years and will continue to persist. Given the state of global markets and global uncertainty, 2016 may be a year where we'll see even greater cost constraint AND, quite possibly, fewer events being held. The signs of this are beginning to emerge via the emails I'm receiving from hotels and venues offering price discounts and booking incentives – a sign they're concerned about

forward bookings.

I dare say I'll go to my grave repeating this but I firmly believe if there was more awareness, understanding and positive action taken in the areas of meeting and event design – ie. formats and agendas strategically designed for effectiveness and objective-based outcomes – the degree to which events suffer during economic downturn would not be so great. As long as events are planned and hosted with no clear business goals or objectives, without careful design and tactics to achieve the desired goals and no tracking and reporting on outcomes and ROI, they will remain vulnerable and stay first in line for the chopping block. Remember the GFC? I think 2016 may offer up a small taste of that. And 2017/18 could be far worse. All management should take an interest in this topic as it affects the general health of the events industry and financial viability of every single event supplier. And it's one in which we can all play a role to help prevent through understanding and advocacy. Are you interested? Do you care? Want to learn and know more?

If you'd like to learn more about how to make your events fresh, innovative and effective, please contact Max Turpin at Conference Focus on 02

9700 7740 or visit the website at conferencefocus.com.au



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

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Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia

Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia

P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) **F:** 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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Editor: Bruce Piper info@busesseventsnews.com.au

Contributors: Guy Dundas, Nathalie Craig, Jasmine O'Donoghue, Bonnie Tai

Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan and Magda Herdick advertising@busesseventsnews.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper accounts@busesseventsnews.com.au

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JOIN AN INTERNATIONAL LEADER EVENT MANAGER

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Come and use your international and domestic corporate and incentive event management experience with this leading global company. You'll be responsible for end to end event management from obtaining event briefs to budgeting, logistics, onsite delivery, support staff management and post event reporting. Previous corporate event management experience within an agency is a must. This is an initial 10 month maternity contract with top salary package & benefits on offer

MAKE THE MOVE INTO EVENTS EVENT COORDINATOR

BRISBANE CBD – UP TO \$52K PKG

Are you an experienced groups consultant looking to make the move into event management? Here's your chance. We are currently looking for a self-motivated and dedicated consultant to come and join a leading event management company. Assisting event managers you'll be involved in a range of duties including booking delegate travel, liaising with suppliers and clients, working onsite and more. This role will be the start of a long term and successful event management career.

IT'S A NUMBERS GAME CORPORATE GROUPS CONSULTANT BRISBANE CBD – \$55K OTE ++

Love the challenge of booking group travel? Wanting to continue your travel career but now in corporate? Here's your chance. This leading TMC is looking for an experienced groups consultant to join their team. You'll be booking primarily corporate group travel with the occasional leisure itinerary. Not only will you enjoy rare Mon – Fri hours but be part of a fun and supportive team, have the opportunity to progress in your career and enjoy superb \$\$.

Want to know more? Apply today, interviewing now.

UPCOMING ROLE

TRAVEL & EVENTS COORDINATOR

MELBOURNE – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$60K+ (DOE)

We have an upcoming opportunity to step up into the MICE industry. This well known events company is looking a strong travel or groups consultant to join their successful team. You will be booking pre and post accommodation, as well as tours and add-on's for clients booked onto events & conferencing. This role will see you earning a sensational salary & working Monday to Friday hours only. If you have at least 4 years consulting experience & experience using either Galileo, Amadeus or Sabre then we want to hear from you!

JOIN IN ON THE GLITZ & GLAMOUR VIP ENTERTAINMENT TRAVEL CONSULTANT MELBOURNE – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$90K (OTE)

This well-established global company are expanding! Recently winning new accounts within the sports & entertainment industries, they now need their next sales superstar to join their professional team. You must have a min. 2 years corporate experience & have the ability to work well under pressure. A top salary package is on offer including uncapped commissions, in addition to famils offerings, invites to exclusive events, in house gym facilities & a great city fringe location with a bright & vibrant office.

FUN IN NUMBERS WITH THIS ROLE

CRUISE GROUPS TRAVEL SPECIALIST

SYDNEY CBD – SALARY PACKAGE UP TO \$55K

Do you know your ship? This global cruise liner is looking for a talented groups specialist to join their growing team. Enjoy creating worldwide bespoke all-inclusive packages, including flights, pre/post arrangements & land excursions, on this elite cruise line. If you have min 4 years groups experience (cruise is desirable), a passion for the seas, solid GDS skills & thrive in a fast paced team; you will be rewarded with a top salary, beautiful offices, supportive team, ongoing development & famils/inspections. Jump ship & come on-board today!

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