



MELB DINES ON WORLD'S BEST

MELBOURNE last night celebrated the best in international cuisine as it hosted the World's 50 Best Restaurants award night at the historic Royal Exhibition Building in Carlton.

The gala event was only the second time the honours have been held outside London, and saw the top accolade go to New York's Eleven Madison Park.

Two Australian restaurants joined the prestigious list, Ben Shewry's Melbourne restaurant Attica (32) and Dan Hunter's regional restaurant Brae (44) near Victoria's Otway Ranges.

Over 1,000 guests attended last night, dining on meals prepared by the team from Neil Perry's Rockpool.

Festivities began on Tue with a Chef's Feast in St Kilda, where guests were welcomed by Shewry and arrived to find fellow Aussie chefs Kylie Kwong (Billy Kwong), Jock Zonfrillo (Restaurant Orana) and Lennox

Hastie (Firedoor) cooking up a storm on the beach.

More than 100 chefs and restaurant representatives from around the world, as well as 50 international media outlets and 26 Academy Chairs, are currently visiting Australia for the week-long official event program, hosted by Tourism Australia.



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has three pages of news.

EEAA promo vid

EXHIBITION and Events Association of Australasia has released self-promotion video that shows the positive impact that the EEAA has had on the industry's growth and development.

The video includes testimonials from members of the Australian business events community, government representatives and business leaders speaking about the Association's effectiveness as an advocate for the sector and the benefits of membership.

Global Meetings Industry Day

TODAY marks the second annual Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID), with organisations around the world holding events to mark the occasion.

Robyn Johnson, ceo of Meetings & Events Australia, said the day provided a great opportunity to acknowledge the impact that meetings and events have on businesses and economies.

"Meetings and events already make a substantial contribution to the Australian economy and there is scope for more growth with support from industry and government," she said.

In New York City, landmarks including the Empire State Building (**pictured**) and One World Trade Centre were lit up blue on the eve of GMID to highlight the occasion.



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Carmen encore woos groups



OPERA Australia has taken centre stage in Sydney's conference and incentive offering with its current production of *Carmen*, attracting hundreds of delegates from major conferences.

The annual Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour has sold almost 3,000 tickets to groups, including delegates from gatherings such as the International Congress of Ocular Oncology, the International Association of Restructuring Insolvency Bankruptcy Professionals, and the Digital Earth Symposium 2017.

As a member of Business Events Sydney, Opera Australia productions are marketed to the city's conference and incentive groups and feature regularly in famils.

Carmen's return season runs to 23 Apr - for details [CLICK HERE](#).

BUREAU GROWTH UP

THE number of international business events brought to Australia by convention bureaux is increasing according to the AACB, but there is still room to boost Australia's market share.

Andrew Hiebl, ceo of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux, said there had been a 7% rise in the number of international business events Australia has secured, since the release of the last forward calendar.

"This outcome has been driven by the strength of our professional bid delivery, financial support put forward by state and local governments, and the industry."

Other key statistics include a 14% increase of the number of international delegates Australia is expected to attract as a result of these events and total estimated delegate expenditure growing by 11%.

The top sectors attracted to Australia are health care and social services (one in four events), professional, scientific and technical services (1 in 6) and information, media and telecommunications (1 in 12).

Hiebl said despite the positive results, the global market for business events was more competitive with Australia missing out on 296 business events and \$1b in expenditure.

IACC & MPI unite for education

TWO of the event industry's major international bodies have united to share education resources.

The International Association of Conference Centers (IACC) and Meeting Professionals International (MPI) have signed a five-year partnership to co-operate on education delivered at annual conferences, regional events and online.

"The leadership teams at MPI and IACC have been collaborating on several successful initiatives over the last two years and now seems the perfect time to bring all this great work together under one strategy," said IACC ceo Mark Cooper.

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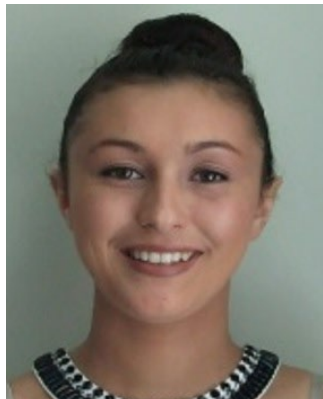
THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) and Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) have announced Sasha Andersen (pictured right) as the inaugural winner of the MEA Young Professional Scholarship.

Andersen is responsible for looking after the incentive and corporate meetings sector as a Melbourne Convention Bureau sales executive.

The scholarship enables a junior bureau staff member to attend the MEA 2017 National Conference.

Robyn Johnson, CEO of MEA, said the scholarship gave junior staff a chance to gain valuable exposure, knowledge and experience that would further their meetings and events career.

The MEA National Conference will take place from 30 Apr – 02 May 2017 at the International Convention Centre Sydney.



VISITORS will be leaving crumbs all over the "Southern Pie-lands" in NSW in Jun as they help celebrate the great Aussie pie with an inaugural Pie Time Festival.

The event will involve more than 30 local pie sites including bakeries, cafes, restaurants, hotels and associated businesses across the Southern Highlands.

In the town of Bowral, the festival will feature pie tastings, cooking demonstrations and a hotly contested pie competition.

Visitors can join the festivities and then stay on with a 'Pie B&B package'.

For details **CLICK HERE**.

ON24 Sydney conference

AUSTRALIA'S first-ever webinar marketing conference will be held in Sydney on 01 May.

The event will be held by ON24, and follows the company's conference in San Francisco which saw more than 600 marketing professionals attend over three days.

ON24 Webinar World will allow delegates to listen to keynote presentations, case studies, live demonstrations and panel discussions.

The line-up includes keynote speaker and Forbes contributor Nicholas Kontopoulos, of SAP Hybris. **CLICK HERE** for details.

GENerating Change

conference
FOCUS
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 include new generation events and making events effective and valuable.

The signs your meeting is from the past (Part 2)

IN THIS series of articles, I'm highlighting the signs that the meeting you're organising or attending is old-school and will never reach its maximum potential. If you missed part 1 of this series, you can read it here.

Crammed agenda: Thinking it was the right thing to do to maximise time, by design the meeting agenda is jam-packed. The vernacular "chock-a-block" gives it meaning. Not only are there back-to-back presentations, but only 10 minutes is allocated for tea breaks and 45 minutes for lunch. Everything is condensed and rushed, giving attendees no time to reflect upon, or discuss, anything communicated. In effect, the brain is not allowed time to process and absorb information. The result is that few details are retained and learning is suppressed – a fact backed up by cognitive psychology.

Back-to-back presentations: The meeting comprises one presentation after another. No time is built into the agenda for reflection, discussion, thought sharing, problem solving or collaboration. Aside from there being scientific proof that lectures are a poor learning tool, unless the presentations are truly engaging and informational (and many are not), attendees will quickly tune out and stop listening altogether. Furthermore, the experts in the room are often not the presenter but the attendees.

It is a huge wasted opportunity not to involve them and draw upon their 'collective intelligence' – their real life experiences – to add value to the event for everyone. It also makes the meeting more engaging and inclusive.

Poor speakers & presenters: So you have a packed agenda with back-to-back lectures and, to make matters worse, the presenters, at best, were average. They lacked impact and inspiration. Their slides were full of text and the few pictures they did use were cheap stock images. They also seemed underprepared and inadequately briefed – their content was off-mark and too generic. As a result, they completely 'lost' the audience, whose minds drifted off elsewhere. Whether presenters are external and paid for, or alternatively, if they are an employee of the host organisation, it is essential they fully briefed on the audience, that desired outcomes are made known, that they are coached and mentored if required and they are given adequate time to prepare and rehearse. You should also ask to see a copy of their slide presentation in advance. The number one reason people attend meetings and conferences is for content – the quest for learning and new ideas. Yet still, this aspect of many events remains overlooked and not given the attention it deserves.

More next time in part 3.

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



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