



GO-AHEAD FOR TARONGA PLAN

SYDNEY'S Taronga Zoo will get a \$40 million boost to its events and hospitality facilities after receiving NSW Government approval for a new accommodation venture.

The harbourside landmark will build 62 guest rooms in an eco-retreat comprising five 'pod' buildings.

It will also extend the existing Taronga Centre with a new restaurant, additional function room and an outdoor terrace.

The move into accommodation is an extension of the zoo's successful 'roar and snore' program which involves overnight stays in tents and has



become a popular option for incentives and small groups. It will be billed as an "Australian habitat exhibit and wildlife retreat" alongside the existing harbour-view event facilities, and will allow up to 131 guests to see animals including kangaroos, wallabies

and koalas surrounding their accommodation.

Construction is expected to begin in Aug and is slated for completion by Mar 2019.

Approval was granted despite opposition from the local Mosman Council which objected to permanent accommodation.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has three pages of news plus a full page from AA **Appointments**.



UNTIL Spam do us part! Mark Benson and Anne Mousley from the UK share a deep, deep affinity for Spam... so much so that they travelled more than 6,000km to the US to say "I do" at the Spam Museum in the city of Austin, Minnesota.



The groom had even legally changed his name out of his enduring love for the canned meat product to Mark "I Love Spam" Benson and said the day was a dream come true, complete with a Spam-themed wedding cake and musubi (spam sushi).

Spam brand manager Jaynee Sherman officiated the event.

Events give a boost to hotels

LATEST STR accommodation occupancy figures released for Mar 2017 show significant growth for Australia's hotel sector, thanks to major events held across the country and Adele's concert tour.

Brisbane had the biggest occupancy turnaround of any major city, going from 70.5% in Mar 2016 to 78.6% in Mar 2017.

An increase in demand came as a result of two Adele concerts held at the Gabba, and the World Science Festival in South Brisbane which saw 182,000 people attend the second running of the event.

Event upgrade

L'AUBERGE Del Mar in San Diego's north coast region is putting the finishing touches to its 930m² indoor meeting space, including six meeting rooms and two ballrooms.

The "destination hotel" has created meeting areas with a beach-inspired ambience.

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MCB and suppliers in Hong Kong



THE Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) took several of the city's corporate incentive suppliers to Hong Kong for its Melbourne Showcase this week.

More than 20 agents attended the event and participated in presentations from the MCB, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC), Southwharf Events, The Langham, Melbourne and Triumph Leisure Solutions.

The event aimed to showcase Melbourne as a key incentive destination in Australia.

Karen Bolinger, ceo of MCB, said the event provided a cost-effective marketing solution for MCB partners to meet key leaders in the Hong Kong business events community.

Pictured above are reps from MCB's incentive suppliers.

ICESAP GETS GLOBAL

GET Global has announced the Incentive Conference and Event Society Asia-Pacific (ICESAP) will join its event as an exclusive association & education partner.

Billed as Australia's first MICE business event dedicated to outbound products, Get Global will make its debut at ICC Sydney on 28 Jul.

As part of its new partnership, ICESAP will deliver the educational element of Get Global via a seminar and networking opportunity, followed by a cocktail party on Thu 27 Jul, the day before the show's opening.

"The partnership we've

established with ICESAP allows us to deliver excellent professional development options to our attendees, especially those in the corporate buyer market," said Donna Kessler, director and co-founder of Get Global.

ICESAP regional vice president for Australasia Joanna Hancock said the program would explore "what the perfect client-supplier relationship looks like".

"This interactive session has been developed based on member and industry feedback as we understand the changing supplier landscape and corporate objectives," she said.

CLICK HERE for event info.

TA puts ICC Sydney on the menu

TOURISM Australia (TA) has included the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) in a new series of case study videos showcasing the country's best food and wine.

The videos are part of TA's Restaurant Australia program which promotes local cuisine to overseas visitors and is credited with helping to drive a \$1 billion increase in food and wine spending by international tourists since 2013.

The ICC Sydney case study video showcases the centre's catering for international events and its focus on local providers under its Feeding Your Performance philosophy.

To view the video **CLICK HERE**.

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Melb ready for LIVE Forum

DESTINATION Melbourne is preparing to follow last year's successful Melbourne LIVE Tourism Forum with the 2017 edition on 15 Jun, under the theme of 'Think About It'.

Laura Cavallo, ceo of Destination Melbourne said, "it encourages industry leaders to consider the impact of our industry on destination and plan for wise growth."

The event will take place at the RACV City Club and features a line-up of speakers who are experts in social, environmental, economic and technological sustainability.

They include Signe Jungersted, director of development at Wonderful Copenhagen, Gus Balbontin, former Lonely Planet chief, and Jon Dee, social entrepreneur.

Tickets are \$395 per person. For more details and registrations **CLICK HERE**.

eHealth expo line-up

THE second eHealth Queensland expo line-up has been announced for the 17 May event at the Royal International Convention Centre in Brisbane.

Amanda Stevens will be the keynote speaker and will talk about consumer behaviour and connecting in a digital world.

Other experts will include Department of Health director-general Michael Walsh, Australian Digital Health Agency ceo Tim Kelsey, and chief medical officer for Elsevier Clinical Solutions, Dr Peter Edelstein, from the US.

Speakers will give talks ranging from five to about 40 minutes in a format organisers said would "keep interest levels high".

A sell-out 1,200 delegates attended the 2016 event.



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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.

Why do we work for nothing?

2017 seems to be the year for meeting and incentive practitioners to raise the thorny issue of payment for providing quotations. At a number of events I have attended this year, including overseas trade shows, there is a lot of suppressed (and some not so suppressed) anger at clients who ask for a proposal and then simply send what one practitioner provides onto another (or several others) to provide a so-called 'competitive price'.

This 'competitive price', of course, does not take into account the fact that the time and effort as well as the expense of providing the initial proposal doesn't have to be included a second time because the work has already been done!

Advertising agencies have no qualms about charging their clients for a pitch. Ask your lawyer to give you a proposal for legal advice and somewhere in the quote there will be a paragraph or three (lawyers are never short of a few words, particularly when someone is paying for them) which tells you that if you do not wish to proceed you'll receive a bill for the quotation.

Plumbers, electricians, computer technicians, builders, doctors of all disciplines, bankers, even travel agents have been known to make a charge for their services if the client doesn't proceed with whatever project they originally approached them about. And yet in the meetings and incentives industries we

are supposed to just notch it up to experience and walk away. Why?

The simple answer is that there are too many so-called practitioners, many of which don't have the necessary experience (although they will tell clients that they do) who won't charge for work to try to convince clients to give them their business because they feel it would be a disincentive. Well maybe, but because of on-line event management systems that will apparently do it all for you - and the 'you' in this case includes your clients - some companies feel it's the only way to compete.

I'm not suggesting that meeting planners and incentive practitioners should form a cartel. This is both illegal (but so is accepting hidden commissions but we all know this is alive and well in our industry!) in Australia and uncompetitive. I am suggesting that industry members charge a reasonable fee to cover the work that goes into producing a proposal if they are unsuccessful in their pitch. This assumes that a pitch is requested and not merely sent as a sales opportunity.

It should also be a pre-condition of providing a proposal that the vendor's intellectual rights to the proposal contents should be respected. How many times have we seen original ideas passed on to competitors and even suppliers while we're left twiddling our fingers...and fuming?

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





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