



FOOD DISRUPTOR INTO EVENTS

FORMER Menulog founders have announced the expansion of FoodByUs, launching a new food marketplace for Australia's conference and event planners.

The aim is to disrupt the \$23.1 billion events sector by offering technology to provide a "one stop shop" for organisers to source high-quality, fresh and locally produced food from a range of wholesalers.

The company said it would offer a seamless online ordering system with easy logistics including delivery.

FoodByUs cofounder & md Ben Lipschitz said event organisers had been frustrated with the current system and were often stuck using one caterer who had a limited selection.

"FoodByUs' new B2B marketplace offers both organisers and wholesale suppliers a smart distribution solution, without the traditionally high markup fees."

Lipschitz said suppliers listed their products on a marketplace and event planners were able to order from any device.

"We offer an ever-changing



marketplace of suppliers catering for all dietary requirements and products to hit any price point," he said.

Lipschitz said the company's technology would also allow organisers to place one-off and recurring orders to save them and suppliers time.

Logistics such as delivering food will be handled by FoodByUs' driver network which will take advantage of

a purpose-built solution that ensures the organisers get their deliveries on time, while communicating the driver's status in real time.

FoodByUs is available for business events in Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane.

It was launched in 2016 by former Menulog founders Gary Munitz and Tim Chandler, alongside Ben Lipschitz.

Picture: Tourism Australia.

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

EEAA awards unveiled

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) has announced the 2017 finalists for its annual Awards for Excellence.

Winners in the show categories will undergo a second round of judging to determine the coveted Best Show winner for 2017.

EEAA chief executive Joyce DiMascio said the calibre of the entries was testament to the talent of the exhibition and event sector in Australia.

Finalists include Luna Park Venues and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre for Best Venue Team award category.

All winners will be named at a gala dinner in Melbourne on 29 Nov.

Virgin Australia joins PCOA

THE Professional Conference Organisers Association (PCOA) is flying high after securing Virgin Australia as a business partner.

Virgin Australia is the first airline to align itself with the PCO Association business partner program since it was set up 10 years ago.

Neil Robertson, business events and groups sales manager at Virgin Australia, said the airline was sure it could make a valuable contribution to the growth and future of the conventions and events industry through the partnership.

Pictured: Maxine Todd, PCO Association and Neil Robertson, Virgin Australia after signing the partnership agreement.



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BUMPER TASSIE YEAR

THE MICE sector in Tasmania is at full steam ahead after a strong 2016/17 financial year, Business Events Tasmania's latest annual report shows.

In the previous financial year, more than 108 conferences took place across the state, which resulted in \$113m in direct spend in the state's economy.

Overall, 105 bids were successful in 2016/17, which represented 23,671 delegates with an estimated future economic value of \$46m.

This was up from 88 bids confirmed in the 2015/16

financial year, which would bring 19,513 delegates and \$35.5m in economic value.

Business Events Tasmania ceo Stuart Nettlefold said 80% of MICE activity in 2016/17 took place outside of the peak tourist season which benefitted the local economy.

The annual turnover for the organisation grew slightly from \$1.46m in 2015/16 to \$1.49 million in 2016/17.

Despite a good year, Business Events Tasmania reported a loss of \$5,000 and retained annual earnings of \$225k.

Whitsundays event deal

WHITSUNDAYS Business Events will provide a free three-night stay for two in the Whitsundays with every business event confirmed at a Whitsunday venue between now and 31 Jan.

The package includes a stay at Coral Sea Resort, Airlie Beach, buffet breakfast and a \$150 dinner voucher and wine at The Clipper Restaurant and Lounge.

The promotion is designed to bring more MICE events to the Queensland region.

Business events marketing specialist at Tourism Whitsundays, Lorelei van Dalen, said the package could be to reward an event planner, a client, or a high-performing staff member.

CLICK HERE for more info.



THEMED dining has been taken to a whole new level in Newport, Virginia, with a local restaurant introducing three *Game of Thrones* burgers, inspired by the popular television show.

The dishes at Viking Burgers are a tribute to the show's recent season finale.

The daddy of them all is the dubbed The Hodor, which has five sirloin patties, bacon and two slices of American cheese.

To make it healthy, customers can chuck on lettuce, tomato and onions for free.

Viking Burger's other two burgers are called The Greyjoy & The White Walker.

You better get in quick as winter is coming!

GENERating Change

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.

Undervaluing ideas & creativity

"A **BAD** idea executed perfectly is still a bad idea". I love that little nugget. It's been a favourite saying of mine for many years now. As a professional event planner or PCO – we go by a variety of labels so call us what you will – we are often asked (read instructed) by clients to execute their event plans, concepts and ideas that to them seem like a good idea but in reality aren't so much. Give us a plan or idea to execute and we'll do it flawlessly. However, if it's a bad idea, executing it with absolute perfection won't make the event any better nor give it any greater impact or effectiveness. It's ideas that make all the difference since great ideas can change minds, change behaviour, change brands, change the world even!

In the same way, let's talk quickly about the power of creativity in our industry.... and the lack of importance and respect it is often given. Since event budgets are under constant scrutiny and have by and large become stagnant, the amount of time and money spent on creative and creativity has become downplayed. Especially in a bidding situation, many agencies will give away their creative to win the heart of a client in return for the production or delivery of an

event. This is especially true if procurement is involved in the decision making and when the main thing that matters to them is how much? From their perspective and when ideas and creativity are bundled in with all the event costs and management fees, how can they strip out and procure or evaluate creative? In these instances, the true value of the great ideas and creative development are often lost and simply not acknowledged by the client. Indeed, I've been told of many instances where the creative ideas of one agency have been "stolen" from them and given to another to execute (usually the incumbent PCO). And yet it's the concept and ideas that can make all the difference, not necessarily how they are executed.

This has become an unfortunate occurrence and trend in our industry. You'd like to think that clients will not only act ethically but also consider the value of great ideas and creativity and the impact they can have on their events, their staff, their customers, their brand. But this is not always the case and it's up to us to highlight it. After all, we're not just 'organising events', we're 'creating experiences' and a great experience will live long in the minds of those that attend.

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

