



TASMANIA'S BOOM SEASON FOR EVENTS

HOBART is hosting one of the largest conferences ever to be held in Tasmania this week with the Australian International Education Conference (AIEC) 2017 running until tomorrow.

Some 1,250 delegates are attending the conference, which is being held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart.

Business Events Tasmania ceo Stuart Nettlefold said the direct economic benefit of the conference was \$4 million.

"The conference also aligns strategically with the substantial work the University of Tasmania is doing in attracting international

students globally," he said.

It is the first time the event has been held in Tasmania.

Nettlefold said the event kicked off a bumper season for conferences in the state.

"This Sep to Nov is a bumper time for business events in Tasmania with over 40 national and international conferences being hosted," he said.

"AIEC demonstrates our ability to host significant conferences in our beautiful city Hobart."

The event is a major opportunity for international education practitioners, teaching staff, researchers, policymakers and other



stakeholders to learn about major industry trends and development and to network with Australian and international colleagues.

This year's theme for the event is "Embracing Diversity", which reflects the diversity in international education.

Photo: Tourism Australia

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news plus the final **BEN** Christmas Venue Guide on **page three** and a full page from **Novotel Brighton**.

AccorHotels buys Mantra

MANTRA Group Limited has announced that it has entered into a binding agreement with AccorHotels, which will see the accommodation giant acquire all the shares of Mantra.

Mantra has now appointed an Independent Expert to determine whether the move is in the interest of shareholders.

If approved, Accor will acquire 28 Peppers hotels, 75 Mantra properties and 24 operating under the BreakFree brand.

Sydney's new "blank canvas"



A NEW event space in Sydney's CBD officially launched this week, called Courtesy of the Artist Loft.

The 200m² gallery is tucked away on the fourth level of The Strand Arcade and is operated by contemporary jewellery store, Courtesy of the Artist, in collaboration with Pendolino Group.

Nina Cueva, director of Courtesy of the Artist, said the space was a "blank canvas" for events, ideal for meetings & cocktail events.

"I think it's special because it's in the middle of the CBD and it's a versatile space," she told **BEN**, adding that "with the types of artists that we represent we can do all sorts of things".

Cueva said Courtesy of the Artist's team building exercises had been popular, such as make-your-own perfume workshops.

The space's "sweet spot" is around 160 cocktail style, or 70 people for a sit down dinner.

etouches new platform

EVENT management software provider etouches has added a Venue Sourcing function to its platform.

Unveiled at IMEX America in Las Vegas this week, the product uses the sourcing and booking technology the company gained when it acquired Zentila in Jun 2016.

The new offering is part of etouches plans to provide an end-to-end meetings solutions for clients.

Venue Sourcing gives access to 225,000 venues worldwide and is unique in that it automates the heavy lifting needed to source, negotiate, and book a meeting and venue.

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SYDNEY BIG EVT COUP

SYDNEY has scored a big win, having secured the hosting rights for the Asia-Pacific region's SAP Field Kick-Off Meeting (SAP FKOM) in 2018 and 2019.

The event is expected to attract 2,800 delegates who will hear SAP's business strategy for the year ahead.

SAP FKOM will be held at ICC Sydney and it will be the first time the conference has been held in Australia.

BESydney ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said the event reinforced Sydney's strengths in hosting major int'l tech conferences. "The interest from the tech

sector in Sydney is truly exciting. We are thrilled to have secured the hosting rights for the Asia-Pacific SAP FKOM in 2018 and 2019," she said.

Sydney won the bid based on its reputation in supporting innovation, the city's business events capabilities as well as the state-of-the-art technology at the ICC Sydney, she said.

"Sydney has secured some of the world's most important ICT conferences and events including the OpenStack Summit 2017," said Lewis-Smith.

SAP is the third largest software manufacturer based on market capitalisation.



AT SOME point every meeting planner comes across an event that turns into a massive train wreck and last week it was the UK's Conservative Party's turn.

What was expected to be a key address by British Prime Minister Theresa May turned into a farce when the set behind her started to fall apart during her speech.

While speaking, the letters behind May began to fall apart one by one, as **pictured**.



IHG rethinks event spaces

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group (IHG) has made a number of changes to its events offering across its Australian properties to combat a rising number of planners who are being asked to deliver "experience creation" functions.

Crowne Plaza Coogee has shifted to utilising every space of the hotel as an events facility from outdoor terraces to creating pop-up experiences for clients.

InterContinental Sydney is offering a 'laneway' space perched between the sandstone walls of Macquarie Street that can accommodate 50 people.

Confessions of a compulsive conference-goer

Andrew Klein, professional MC and presentation skills speaker and director of SPIKE Presentations, presents his front line observations on conferences in a regular feature in **BEN**.

The tide is high

(A small case-study in clever conference problem-solving):

A MONTH ago I was MC'ing a conference for MGA Insurance Brokers on the Gold Coast. The conference dinner was held at the lovely McLaren's Landing on South Stradbroke Island. For those who have not been there before, it is a wonderful location, accessible only by boat and set up to resemble a very comfortable, well-equipped cross between Gilligan's Island and a Survivor Tribal Council. Delicious food and first rate service.

We arrived there by large boat. The event was going swimmingly (no pun intended given what was about to happen). The banquet dinner had taken place and the delegates were having fun on the dance-floor.

While this was all going on, unbeknownst to the guests, a once-in-40-years King Tide occurred, totally flooding the jetty out to the boat. The island event area itself was untouched and the conference delegates were none the wiser.

But the sudden rise in the tide brought with it a small dilemma: how to get several hundred delegates out to the large boat with absolutely no jetty and no smaller boats to ferry them.

Remember this type of flood is a once in 40 year occurrence.

Simple Solution: Shuttle the delegates 20 at a time on the back of an old cattle truck across to the other side of the island (a 10 minute journey), to



board the boat from another unaffected jetty where the tide was much lower. Meanwhile the rest of the delegates simply party on until the shuttle returns.

End result: A bonus, enormously fun cattle truck ride for all the guests, involving much merriment and laughter and a memorable, enjoyable end to the function. The guests actually loved it.

A great example of lateral thinking, problem solving and a wonderful can-do approach to managing the unexpected.

A huge shout out to Jason and the team from McLaren's Landing and the wonderful event organisers Dean, Ed and Hazel from Conference Images. Watching them all keep a cool head and solve a potentially huge problem (several hundred guests unable to get off an island!) was great to see.

So next time you're holding a conference on the Gold Coast, take your delegates to McLaren's Landing for dinner but try and plan it on the night of a once-every-40-years King Tide, to make it even more memorable.

If you are looking for an MC for your next conference or a speaker/trainer on presentation skills or pitching skills, email andrew@lunch.com.au or visit his website at www.andrewklein.com.au.



CHRISTMAS VENUE GUIDE



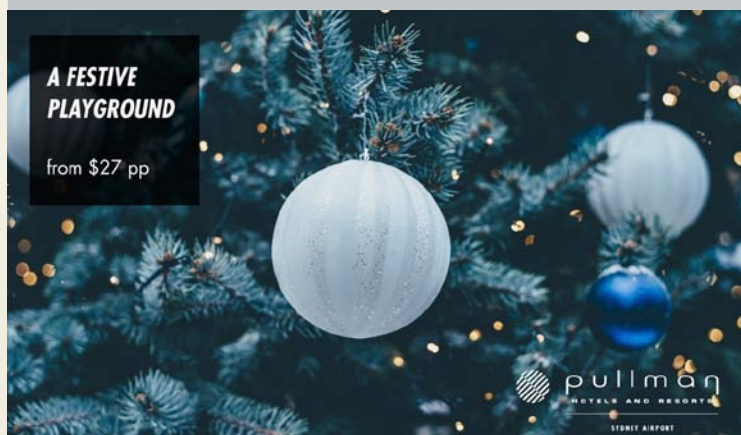
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