



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

The Fantauzzo

ART Series Hotels has named its \$100m boutique luxury property at Howard Smith Wharves, Brisbane, The Fantauzzo, after contemporary artist, Vincent Fantauzzo (**BEN** 20 Nov).

Carved into the cliff under Story Bridge, the 166-room hotel is scheduled to open in Mar 2019.

Bookings are open and can be made **HERE**.



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M&OP REVEALS STAGE THREE

MELBOURNE & Olympic Parks (M&OP) will embark on stage three of its \$1 billion redevelopment in early 2019, following the completion of stage one in 2014 and close completion of stage two.

The stage three redevelopment will feature a new Function and Media Centre with the capacity to host 3,000 guests and is scheduled for opening in 2022.

Other developments include a production kitchen and central logistics hub, a 5,000-seat show court arena and the completion of the central terrace that will link to the Rod Laver Arena.

"Few venues in Australia can connect guests as directly, and as intimately with the city as we can," said M&OP Premier Events & Experiences General Manager Lara Burnes.

"Equally, not many could host the span of extravagant



sit-down galas," she said, or an "iconic dinner under the stars in our retractable roofed Margaret Court Arena".

"We work to cater to bespoke experiences and are inspired by delivering successful events that create an iconic and memorable experience for our clients," she said.

M&OP venues include: Rod Laver Arena; AAMI Park, which offers an array of spaces

catering for events from 10 to 1,000 guests; Margaret Court Arena and Melbourne Arena, both catering for 200 to 8,500 guests with flexibility for formal dinners, cocktail-style events, galas and conferences.

M&OP is **pictured** and **inset** is a formal dinner held at Margaret Court Arena.

Get Global 19

GET Global, the one-day event showcasing international destinations for the Australian and New Zealand outbound business events market, has launched its 2019 prospectus.

The program features a new floor plan and a discounted price for additional exhibitor passes, while insurance is now included in all packages and the buyer list will now be shared with exhibitors before the show.

"Every year our market is different, and so our show will evolve to reflect the needs and desires of people wanting to sell and buy international events," said Co-Founder and Director Donna Kessler.

View the prospectus **HERE**.

Brisbane celebrates the big 4-0

THE Brisbane Visitors and Convention Bureau celebrated its 40th anniversary recently with a networking event at Howard Smith Wharves for around 200 guests and members.

Brisbane Mayor Graham Quirk said the formation of the bureau marked the beginning of significant growth in the city's business events and tourism sectors.

"It was recognised that Brisbane needed a dedicated authority to attract conventions and visitors, and today these sectors are significant drivers of Brisbane's economy," he said.



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BECA ADVOCACY FOR BIZ

MEMBERS of the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA), launched a pre-election campaign at Parliament House in Canberra last week calling on Members of Parliament to support the sector.

Business events specialists met with 12 key MPs to push for a strong business events policy and additional funding through Tourism Australia.

“Whilst Australia had a strong reputation hosting business events, our international competitiveness is being compromised by markets in

Asia, and we need to act now to curb the impact,” said Chairman of BECA Matt Hingerty.

Pictured are Barry Neame, Professional Conference Organisers of Australia; Joyce DiMascio, CEO Exhibition & Event Association of Australasia; Joel Fitzgibbon MP; Robyn Johnson, CEO MEA; & Andrew Hiebl, CEO Association of Australian Convention Bureaux.



MEA new board

MEETINGS & Events Australia (MEA) has welcomed a new board of directors, following elections held last week in Sydney.

“MEA has been through a period of consolidation and growth and there is still a lot to be achieved,” said MEA CEO Robyn Johnson.

“I am looking forward to working with the new MEA Board to launch new initiatives and programs in the year ahead.”

The new Board of Directors comprises Kate Smith, Waldronsmith Management, Vice Chairperson; Michael Firman, Harry the Hirer, Treasurer; Alana Hay, Milestone Creative Australia, Director; Anne Jamieson, Saxton Group, Chairperson; and Robyn Johnson, MEA Chief Executive Officer.



IF YOU prefer sending invitations the old-fashion way then don't be alarmed when a thank you doesn't come your way in a week, two weeks or even a month.

An Aussie bloke was recently made to wait two months for his package to be delivered from America, as a result of the postal company getting confused between Austria and Australia.

The photo shows that even postal workers in Austria were getting frustrated.



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.

Why your post event survey is a sham – Part 3

MY THIRD and final instalment explaining why event survey results are largely corrupt, phoney and misleading includes another example of a post event survey.

Most importantly too, I explain why all of this is so damaging and detrimental to our industry.

In early June this year on the Gold Coast, Destination Gold Coast hosted their annual “This is Gold Coast” Business Exchange. Post event, it was reported, and I quote, “This is Gold Coast gets 100% approval rating from buyers.” And, “The event clearly hit the mark with hosted buyers, with a 100% satisfaction rating.” And so ostensibly, the event was a magnificent success. But was it?

Firstly, if you're only judging success by rating levels of satisfaction – ie. the typical ‘happy sheet’ rating method of asking, essentially, “Were you happy?” – then sure, the event was a success.

But how does that relate to business results and bottom line impact? Why should suppliers and exhibitors care about satisfaction ratings? Most importantly, how much new business was secured?

And if a Likert scale was used on the survey form where “satisfied” was the centre option between “Brilliant” at one end and “Terribad” at the other, then the reported result of “satisfied” was merely middle of the road. (I'd love to delve more deeply into the meaning of satisfaction and its direct relationship with expectations but have no room to do it here).

Let's look too at how biases influenced the responses of hosted buyers. Those hosted to attend from interstate and

overseas I dare say had the following travel expenses paid for by the organisers: their flights, accommodation, airport transfers, entry to the show and networking events. And so put yourself into the shoes of a hosted buyer completing the post event survey.

Three recognised and ingrained demand characteristics – participation bias, survey bias and social desirability bias – would come into play affecting your responses, making you adorn them and dress them up.

In turn, your responses mislead organisers and turn the entire process into a quasi-fake, self-deluding sham. I'm not having a shot at Destination Gold Coast here. I'm simply making the point that the large majority of event surveys are poorly designed, ask the wrong questions and are corrupted by bias.

Which brings me to the most important point of all, and that is why this is so harmful to the events industry.

On the one hand, false and deceptive event survey results delude event owners and decision makers into thinking their events require no improvement. “If it ain't broke don't fix it.” (And BTW, this is the symptom of another bias known as default bias, aka status quo bias). Therefore, event design – programs and agendas – remain rooted in the past. Also, unless we're prepared to measure, survey and report on what really matters – the business impact and ROI of events and not just “Did we make you happy?” – events are destined to feel the full brunt of the next global economic downturn, which, IMO, is not off.

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 email max@conferencefocus.com.au.

