



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

SEG to stage first AIME event

AIME'S Uncover Melbourne: Hosted Buyer and Media Cocktail evening at Old Melbourne Gaol will be the launch event for the venue's new exclusive caterer Showtime Event Group (SEG).

SEG was appointed to the role by the National Trust Australia (Vic) last year.

Showtime Event Group general manager Brad Dabbs said that the business events sector has driven the growth of the business.

"We identified nearly seven years ago that the biggest growth opportunity for our business was in the business events sector, and we developed a 10-year strategy to leverage this insight," he said.

AIME will take place at the MCEC on 20-21 Feb.

MEANWHILE, Conventions & Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) has announced a delegation of 11 partners will be at AIME alongside Tourism New Zealand.

Companies manning the NZ stand include Air New Zealand, AccorHotel & convention bureaux from Auckland, Christchurch and Queenstown.

AUSTRALIA SET FOR GOOD YEAR

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) has welcomed Australia's inclusion in the 20th Global Exhibition Barometer by The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI).

The report found Australia was one of the optimistic business event markets surveyed.

Just over 40% of Australian event companies also expect to see strong growth in their operating profit by 10%.

Australia was one of the more cautious markets, compared to Europe on 50% and the rest of the Asia Pacific on 44%.

EEAA chief exec Joyce DiMascio said the study highlighted a strong year ahead for Australia.

"Suppliers are very positive about 2018 with a wide-range of new shows to be launched across new industry sectors."

This marks the first time

Australia has been included on the global report and follows an MoU signed between the EEAA and UFI in Sep (**BEN 21 Sep**).

The findings also showed that 29% of Australian MICE businesses reported the state of the economy to be the most important issue facing the industry, followed by 26% concerned with competition from within the sector.

Both of those findings were above the global average, which UFI says was attributed to the country's geographic isolation.

UFI research manager Christian Druart said despite the isolation, Australians looked to internationalise their businesses.



"Three out of every ten Australian companies participating in the research state that they want to operate in new countries and markets."

Brazil, the UK, Italy, USA, South Africa and China were among others included in the survey.

Pictured is UFI ceo Kai Hattendorf and EEAA chief exec Joyce DiMascio after signing their MoU in Sep.

Riverside to welcome events

THE Inglis Riverside Stables complex at Warwick Farm in Western Sydney has opened its doors with a five-star luxury hotel and events centre.

Australia's largest purpose-built thoroughbred racing precinct has a 144-room William Inglis Sofitel Hotel and a number of different outdoor and indoor spaces designed to cater for events of all sizes.

Venues include The Sales Arena which can cater for banquet dining as well nine VIP suites that be used as breakout spaces.

The Sofitel features the Grand Arme Meeting Room that can cater for 50 people cocktail-style or 90 in a theatre layout.

The Inglis Riverside Stables is a 40 minute drive from the Sydney central business district.



Next regional support

NEXT Hotels & Resorts is hitting the road in search of key locations to expand its Country Comfort brand.

Franchise mgr Jeff Claxton will begin his push into regional NSW and Vic during Feb to speak to hotel owners or those wishing to invest.

Claxton said the move will support country properties as regional Australia sees a surge in visitor demand.

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MEA AWARDS CLOSE

NOMINATION will close next Wed 14 Feb for the MEA Industry Awards.

The gongs acknowledge the achievements of the MICE industry and showcase the outstanding work of individuals and businesses in Australia.

This year's event in Adelaide will mark a number of changes to the awards ceremony.

Categories have been rejuvenated to recognise the evolution of the meetings and events industry.

25 of the 38 awards are new or have been updated as part

of the sweeping changes, while the application documents have been simplified.

For the first time, MEA is inviting members to nominate their Outstanding Industry Professional, which can be done through the MEA portal.

Those wishing to submit an application will need to note that the eligibility period is Oct 2016 to Dec 2017.

The MEA Industry Awards will be staged at a gala dinner during the 2018 MEA Conference in Adelaide in May.

CLICK HERE for more info.

Sun Coast event funding

BUSINESS Events Sunshine Coast is advising meeting planners that submissions for The Business Events Assistance Program funding support close on 01 Mar.

To be eligible, conferences must run for at least two days and have a minimum of 200 delegates, of which 75% must come from outside the Sunshine Coast area.

Funding is valid for events staged up until 2021.

CLICK HERE for more.

Bris appointee

MARRIOTT has named Brad Mercer as complex gm of The Westin Brisbane & Four Points by Sheraton Brisbane from 15 Mar.

Mercer will help launch The Westin Brisbane in Nov.



IT SEEMS like the sky will soon be limit at the Int'l Exposition Center in Cleveland, US, following plans to convert an old cold war plane into a restaurant.

The Boeing KC-97G Stratofreighter, built to drop nuclear bombs against the Soviet Union, will now be a 50-seat bistro and lounge.

The venue says its new addition will attract all sorts of new people to the centre.

Let's hope they serve up better grub at this joint than most airlines do.



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*.

Add a little *Coco* to your presentation

MY CONFESSION this month is that my favourite movie of 2017 (which just snuck into cinemas before Christmas) was a children's film - the beautiful and touching animated Pixar film "*Coco*" about the Mexican celebration 'Día de los Muertos' (Day of the Dead).

That this was my favourite film should be hardly surprising as Pixar films are in my opinion amongst the most creative, original and entertaining movies to come out of Hollywood in the last 20 years or so. *Toy Story*, *Finding Nemo*, *Wall-E*, *Up* and *Inside Out*. Each one a lasting classic. If you haven't seen them, stop reading this now and jump onto Netflix and binge-watch them.

Anyway, what has my love of Pixar films got to do with the world of conferences and conference presentations in particular?

Coco, like most Pixar films doesn't just entertain, it has a strong underlying message – and it gets the balance between entertaining and thought-provoking messaging just right. While not giving away any dreaded spoilers, I can comfortably say it makes you think while making you laugh (and cry). Similarly, the best conference presentations have a clear underlying message but always strive to keep the audience engaged. Presenters who make their



audiences laugh and cry – are often the most impactful and memorable, much like the best movies.

The best presentations aim for the heart and the mind – they "move" the audience and have an emotional impact. It brings to mind the wonderful Maya Angelou quote – "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel".

Coco was so moving, and packs such an emotional punch, that I will remember some of the scenes for years to come.

Not only that, just like the most memorable conference presentations, *Coco* has colour, movement, humour, great attention to detail, it clearly involved an incredible amount of design, impeccable research, preparation and most importantly – effortless storytelling.

And without wishing to draw too long a bow, the main song in the film is called "Remember Me".....isn't that what all presenters should aim for?

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.

