



ICC SYD BEATS EXPECTATIONS

THE International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) has smashed the revenue goal for its first year according to figures released in a Deloitte Access Economics study.

The venue eclipsed its slated target of \$200 million for the year by an impressive margin of \$585 million, with 71% of that figure driven by the spend from int'l and interstate visitors.

The Deloitte report also suggested the influx of arrivals from outside of Sydney in ICC's first year of operation has created 1.5 million overnight stays for Sydney hotels and created 3,700 jobs.

The NSW State Government was quick to congratulate the venue for delivering the sizeable cash injection into the state's economy.

"Like the Hong Kong Convention Centre and London Excel, ICC Sydney has cemented itself as a leading venue and helped shine the spotlight on Sydney," said NSW Minister for



Finance, Services and Property, Victor Dominello.

ICC Sydney's chief executive officer Geoff Donaghy was also quick to vocalise his positive response to the results.

"ICC Sydney is proud to have welcomed 1.3 million visitors across 755 different events, a significant number of which have seen boosted success and attendance figures alongside a delegate satisfaction rating of

95% and a client satisfaction rating of 93%," he said.

Key stats for the venue in its first year included hosting 36 major int'l events, 151 national conventions and 71 exhibitions.

Innovations extended to being the first venue of its kind to introduce remote airline check-in and baggage services and deploying the first virtual reality video experience for an Australian conference venue.

Today's issue of BEN

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

Canberra new meeting guide

THE Canberra Convention Bureau has debuted its new meeting planner for the events industry.

Canberra Convention Bureau ceo Michael Matthews said the planner had a strong focus on the entire region this year.

The guide is broken down into sections on venues, hotels, cultural activities, wineries and snow etc.

Matthews said the guide was available online, **HERE**, and was being distributed at the AIME conference and to members in the mail.

PCMA-ICESAP new model

PROFESSIONAL Convention Management Association - The Incentive Conference & Event Society Asia-Pacific (PCMA-ICESAP) is committing more resources to support the business events sector in Asia-Pacific.

Initiatives will include doubling its number of vice-presidents in the region, offering more than 12 local face-to-face education and networking events this year, and the introduction of a new membership model.

PCMA-ICESAP made the announcement at the AIME conference in Melbourne.

Langham Melb new ballroom



THE Langham, Melbourne has revealed that the hotel will debut its expanded and enhanced ballroom overlooking the Yarra River in Feb 2019.

The hotel's new spaces will include a tech-driven boardroom, flexible function and meeting rooms, a "gallery" pre-function space and a 630-guest Yarra Ballroom.

The 572m² ballroom can also seat 360 banquet style and 425 in a theatre layout.

With floor-to-ceiling windows, the venue will be well equipped to take advantage of its picture-perfect location.

Mums key to Geelong events

BUSINESS Events Geelong has boosted its social responsibility profile by announcing a new partnership with volunteer organisation Geelong Mums.

The deal will see Business Events Geelong actively promoting Geelong Mums to conference organisers.

"Participating in the corporate social responsibility program... provides an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the community and to those in need," said convention bureau manager of Business Events Geelong, Mark Day.

Geelong Mums assists children and parents experiencing hardship by giving new and pre-loved baby goods and nursery equipment to families.



Discover the impact the Commonwealth Games is set to have on the Gold Coast in the February issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK HERE to read **travelBulletin**

AIME OFF TO A FLYER

THE who's who of the industry has hit Melbourne for this year's Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME).

Set to wrap up today, the trade show welcomed hundreds of exhibitors and buyers from over 20 countries and every corner of Australia to network, learn meet and connect.

The two-day action-packed program has seen a raft of announcements from some of the industry's key suppliers, venues and bureaux.

Announcements included AACB unveiling the host venue for its annual conference this year, new details on the PCMA-ICESAP partnership and ICC Sydney's results reveal.

The Auckland Convention Bureau also revealed that the city had secured \$33 million worth of business events from the Australian market.

AIME project manager Angela

Sciacca said the education program at AIME went a long way to revealing the complex issues event managers are concerned with.

"These sessions provide critical information to our delegates who come to AIME to stay on top of their game."

Sciacca added that exhibitors had delivered outstanding shows on the floor, by bringing together "a colourful, engaging atmosphere to do business, learn and connect," she said.

Highlights on trade show floor included Matt Wright, the Outback Wrangler from the Wild Australia series, who visited the NT stand to promote the destination, while a "selfiebot" was caught roaming around taking selfies of delegates for a large picture mosaic.

Business Events News will have more coverage from AIME in our next edition.

Cvent launches challenge

CVENT has celebrated its first birthday at AIME, by confirming that during 2017 it signed more than 1,000 customers in the APAC.

To celebrate this milestone, the company is launching the Cvent Express Challenge to the events industry.

Delegates are invited to test the time it takes to set up an event website, launch an event, register and print a badge with Cvent Express.

The challenge is a bid by Cvent to showcase how fast and simple the event management process can be and to demonstrate how technology is reinventing the way event planners manage and market events.

BCEC & Rydges join forces

BRISBANE Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has joined forces with Rydges Hotel South Bank to open up opportunities for small and medium sized conferences.

South Bank Conferences scheme will allow meeting planners to offer a conference centre experience with the added convenience of a single point of contact for both accommodation and conference facilities.

The recently refurbished Rydges South Bank offers a private entry from the hotel right to the BCEC.

BCEC gm Bob O'Keeffe said the program would provide value and choice for clients.

Ask the Front Office

THIS week we get to know Luke Shore, the front office manager at Mantra Legends.

What made you want to get in the hotel business?

Once I finished high school, I was looking at courses to apply for at University. Like many others, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my career but I knew it needed to be something where I had plenty of opportunity to talk to people. I ended up selecting Business in Tourism Management which saw me get my first job in a hotel.

What do you love about your position?

I love that it is forever changing and no two days are the same. It's also a very social role that is extremely fast paced but that's what I love about it.



Most famous person you have dealt with?

Whilst I was working in the UK, I checked in Sir Lenny Henry a very famous UK comedian.

Do you have any memorable requests that have been made by guests?

Most memorable request from a guest is they wanted a framed picture of Cosmo Kramer on their bedside table - we couldn't help but to do it for them.

What is your best tip you have for guests staying at a hotel?

Read the hotel information sheet; you would be surprised what you can learn from that. i.e. the location of the pool etc.

Key to a happy guest?

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AACB TO QUEENSLAND

THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) has announced that it will hold its annual conference on the Sunshine Coast in Aug 2018.

AACB announced the successful bid by Business Events Sunshine Coast (BESC) during AIME which is underway this week in Melbourne.

Andrew Hiebl, ceo of AACB, said the bureaux was excited to experience the hospitality of the Sunshine Coast during its 29th annual conference. "The AACB is proud to

showcase its regional members, with the Annual Conference being held in regional Australia six times over the past decade."

It is anticipated that up to 120 people will attend the Conference in Mooloolaba between 12 and 14 Aug.

Delegates will be made up of city and regional convention bureaux and other guests.

Visit Sunshine Coast ceo Simon Latchford said the event came at a time when the region was going from strength to strength in the events arena.



EXHIBITIONS are rarely accused of not shedding enough light on their subjects, however, one new event in New York may have good reasons to keep its attendees in the dark.

American Museum of Natural History is currently working on a floor-to-ceiling installation depicting creatures from the deep sea that glow in the dark.

"Unseen Oceans" opens its doors to the public in Mar.

EEAA wants more youth

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) has called on the Business Events industry to employ entry level staff through a new traineeship program developed with TAFE NSW and Apprenticeship Support Aust.

EEAA chief exec Joyce DiMascio said the industry should take responsibility for making the sector an employer of choice.

"We urge the industry to act now and employ trainees in order to feed the employment pipeline and address the skills and labour shortage in the sector."

The program hopes to capitalise on a surge in new events organisers are planning to launch in 2018.



Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.

AIM HIGH, AIME LOW

I MUST admit that I thought for their final involvement with AIME, Reed would want to go out on a high considering that they also want to attract delegates to their other trade shows around the world. Sadly, I was bitterly disappointed.

Even as I walked along the concourse of the MCEC, two people who were heading out advised me not to bother and that the show was the worst ever. Nevertheless I obtained my badge and headed into the exhibition area. My disappointment started there. The show was small - smaller than I believe I have ever seen it - with what appeared to be more exhibitors than visitors.

To the show's credit it was well laid out and the signage exceptional but when you realise that this was probably dictated by the need to fill the space rather than anything else the disappointment continued. No airlines (that I could see), no major hotel groups. I think it's probably a miracle that the show managed to attract the number of NTOs that it did.

Bearing in mind the cost of a stand at AIME (higher than almost any other trade show) some of the exhibitors clearly still thought it worthwhile to be there. As I write this it is the second day of the show and I suppose the MCB and

Reed might still pull a few rabbits out of hats.

Thirty International buyers (I was reliably informed) is not many considering the cost. The slack was certainly not taken by many in the business events industries. Even at the last, it would seem that the MCB and Reed have not learnt the lesson that greed is not good; both requiring their 'cut' from the cost of each stand thus driving the price up.

It's not a fair comparison because of size and duration but 'Get Goba', the new business events trade show in Sydney, is a vastly cheaper proposition for exhibitors and, so I am told, very much more cost-effective. An altogether better event which is precisely what our industry needs.

All this creates a very high expectation for AIME 2019 and I hope the new exhibition organiser has taken note of the many criticisms that AIME has attracted over the last few years which clearly the MCB and Reed have not. I will not prejudge next year's show but it needs to bring the WOW factor back to the event if we are not to be reading AIME's obituary days afterwards.

I wish AIME 2019 every success and, if asked, will contribute all I can to make it so.

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





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