



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

Ciobo wines and dines US

AUSTRALIA'S Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Steven Ciobo, is in New York this week selling the virtues of Australia as a premier destination for events.

Among the incentives put forward to travel to Australia has been the local wine, with an event supported by The Ultimate Winery Experiences of Australia held to showcase Aussie produce to the US market.

Ciobo's latest trip is part of the Turnbull Government's \$12 million Boosting Business Events Bid Fund program, created specifically to attract more lucrative global events down under.

DARWIN TURBOCHARGES AHEAD

A \$13 million stimulus package awarded to NT Major Events has started to pay dividends with Darwin gearing up to host the 2018 Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) Meeting Place.

The event will take place 19-21 Nov and is expected to attract 85 international travel trade buyers and 300 Australian travel sellers to the city.

The Northern Territory Government launched its Turbocharging Tourism Action Plan earlier this year to help lure large scale events to the Territory.

"Securing the lucrative 2018 ATEC Meeting Place travel trade event is a great early win for the industry under 'Turbocharging' Tourism," said Acting Minister for Tourism and Culture Eva Lawler.

"Conference delegates spend more on average than other visitors, this is why we are aggressively pursuing business events both domestically and

from Asia," she added.

Preceding the three-day event, attendees are scheduled to be taken on tours of the Top End to help them sell the region as a destination of choice for conference & event organisers.

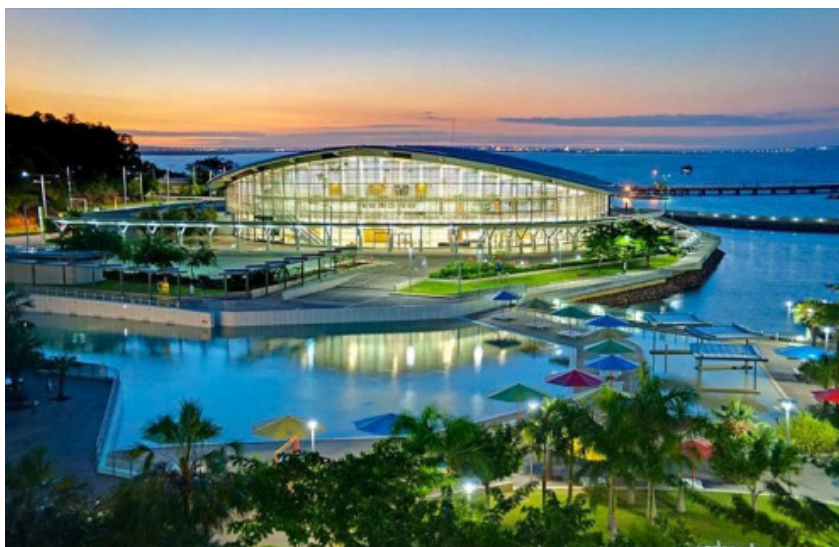
ATEC managing director Peter Shelley believes Darwin will prove to be a great location for the conference.

"Our members indicated a strong demand to hold Meeting

Place in the Northern Territory and ATEC is excited to be taking the event to Darwin in November," Shelley said.

"This year we have seen a revival of the Crocodile Dundee legend as part of a concerted effort to engage international visitors, highlighting the rugged beauty of the Australian outback," he added.

Pictured: The Darwin Convention Centre.



Airbnb events

ACCOMMODATION sharing platform Airbnb has launched a new service targeting the business events industry.

Event organisers can now use Airbnb for Events to create an interactive map of Airbnb listings located close to their venues and embed the map directly on their event website.

The new tool also creates a personalised landing page that can be shared with attendees.

Gold Coast set to host its largest business event

STILL riding high from the fervor of hosting The Commonwealth Games, the Gold Coast will next month be home to the biggest business event it has ever secured.

Chinese personal healthcare behemoth, Infinitus China, has announced the Qld city as the destination of choice for its overseas incentive program

which will see a sizable delegation make the trip and result in a cash injection of approximately \$40 million into the state's economy.

"Ten accommodation providers will host 7,000 delegates over 10 days" said Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk.

More broadly, the Gold Coast

has set itself lofty ambitions in the business events space for the rest of the year

"Another 16 events are still in the bidding stage...these events could bring an extra 6,500 delegates to the Gold Coast and have an estimated value of \$15.7 million," said Tourism Industry Development Minister, Kate Jones.

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GEELONG CASH BOOST

THE Victorian Govt has invested \$153.3m towards the Geelong City Deal in its latest budget, the majority of which will be allocated towards constructing the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The proposed 3,700m² facility will feature an exhibition hall, banquet room, and a plenary hall with at least 1,000 seats.

Plans will also seek to ensure the location is properly future-proofed, with the design to enable scope for expansion activity down the track.

“The new Convention Centre will be a place where people



will want to do business – it will strengthen tourism and create good jobs for our region,” said local MP for the seat of Bellarine Lisa Neville.

Benefits from the Geelong City Deal will include an extra \$1.1b for the state’s economy and 1,000 jobs created annually.



WHEN you plan your next exhibition it might pay dividends to square away some budget for a scarecrow.

That may well have been the afterthought from the Art Gallery of South Australia after an overzealous myna bird gatecrashed its Colours of Impressionism exhibition.

The bird darted recklessly between million dollar masterpieces before finally succumbing to capture by men armed with a long broom (pictured) - another feather in the cap for Adelaide pest control.



ICCS ups game

A RANGE of new services & guidelines for ICC Sydney have been introduced, which aim to highlight the venue’s commitment to excellence.

New signage and branding guidelines will provide greater brand exposure, while the introduction of a full exhibition manual and exhibitor portal will allow clients to view and order services from one location.

The venue has also signed an agreement with logistics co Agility Fairs & Events to help streamline the freight component of events.

MEANWHILE, the ICC has secured the ‘Best Event Venue - Capacity over 500’ title at the 2017 NSW MEA Awards, advancing to the finals in Adelaide on 06 May.

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.

Audience engagement – part 3

IN THIS article, I’d like to share what I believe are some of the key ideas and components for the engagement of event attendees.

Event design: I’ve deliberately put this at the top of my list since the thoughtful creation and design of an event has more influence on delegate engagement than anything else. Read that again. Need convincing? Well, hear it from a higher authority than me in the form of Julius Solaris from Event Manager Blog: “Anecdotal evidence and all research available puts emphasis on event design as the key driver for engagement”.

Content crowdsourcing and co-creation: Use pre-event surveys and conduct small focus groups with representatives of your target audience to choose topics and develop content. If attendees have a say in this and what they want to know and learn, they’ll be far more likely to be engaged in the event... even before it starts.

Room set-up: Theatre style, classroom style, cabaret style... boring! What about shaking things up a bit and have your delegates enter a room with it set anything other than what they’re expecting. Depending upon your numbers, try campfire, fishbowl or world café...or use a combination of anything. Bring in different furniture, like coffee tables or even beanbags. Imagine entering an environment you weren’t expecting. Are you not immediately surprised and interested? Is that not the very

essence of engagement?

Content delivery: I’ve lost count of the amount of times I’ve mentioned this subject in articles over the years but I’ll say it again: Ditch the 45-minute monologue lectures and presentations. Shorten them and include more participation time, more interaction time, more discussion, more Q&A. There are two very good reasons for this, both scientifically validated: 1) human attention spans have reduced to just 10 minutes, and lectures are the least effective means of knowledge transfer and learning. Getting people to talk (discussion) is better. Best of all is getting them to do something (experiential). So if you don’t want your audience to become disengaged, get them doing something, not just sitting and listening. Try TEDx style 20-minute presentations. Try PechaKucha style 7-min presentations. Interview presenters TV-style rather than have them deliver a monologue. Break up 45-minute presentations into smaller chunks with discussion and longer Q&A time.

During a meeting or conference running a full day (9am to 5pm), of these eight hours how long are your delegates just sitting there listening? If it’s over half the time, it’s too long and you won’t create the engagement levels you seek, nor will attendees learn as much.

Read part 1 and 2 in this series [here](#).

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

