



BCEC HOSTS INT'L ROBOTICS FORUM

THE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) officially opened this week at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (BCEC).

The five-day annual event kicked off 21 May and has attracted more than 2,500 int'l delegates to Brisbane.

"It is the first time this conference has been held in Australia and having Brisbane host this cutting edge event enhances our growing reputation as an innovation powerhouse," said Qld Innovation and Tourism Industry Development Minister Kate Jones.

Plenaries, poster presentations, and interactive sessions all feature prominently on ICRA's program, with inventor and UC Berkeley Professor Ken Goldberg and assistant professor at the University of Toronto Institute for Aerospace



Twitter: @UomRobotics

Studies Angela Schoellig both providing keynote speeches.

Big ideas discussed at the event included autonomous drone flight, machine learning, marine imaging, and the application of artificial intelligence in robots.

The ICRA also upped its engagement with the general public by carrying out a series of technology installations prior to the main conference.

Examples included Robowars, a fight to the death competition for robot warriors and an art installation where members of the public had robot artists sketch their portraits.

Today's issue of **BEN**

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

CINZ 2018

AUCKLAND is gearing up to host Conventions and Incentives New Zealand's CINZ Meetings conference from 30-31 May.

The event will see more than 190 exhibitors, including 20 new additions, sell the virtues of local venues, theming companies, hotels, AV companies, regional bureaux, and attractions from 19 regions to incentive buyers.

"For both exhibitors and buyers, this is an opportunity to find out how these experts can assist with their professional development," said CINZ chief executive Sue Sullivan.

For the second year, Air NZ will host four buyers from Argentina - register **HERE**.



Business Events Manager

Visit Sunshine Coast, the Regional Tourism Organisation responsible for promoting tourism across Queensland's Sunshine Coast, is looking to appoint a dynamic industry professional to manage Business Events Sunshine Coast.

We are seeking an experienced manager who has worked extensively in the business events and conventions sector and is seeking a new challenge in one of Australia's fastest growing regional markets. It is a full-time, fixed term contract for two years.

To learn more about this exciting opportunity with Visit Sunshine Coast: please click here or email Gillian Toner: gillian.toner@visitsunshinecoast.com



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FRATELLI AT ICC SYD

ITALIAN food and dining emporium Fratelli Fresh will this week open its doors to a brand new all-day dining and events destination, located below Sydney's International Convention Centre (ICC).

The 1,100m² space boasts 30m high ceilings, and will be sectioned into a range of interactive dining spaces, live cooking stations and bars.

The new venue aims to offer a unique dining experience for workshops and conferences, as well as post-ICC events, catering for up to 2,000 guests.



Rockpool Dining Group Director of Events Leila Carey said Fratelli's location would make it "a go-to destination for events organisers", with its space "designed to be flexible for a range of gastronomic interactive experiences".

Fratelli Fresh opens 25 May.

Guest speaker

MICE trade event Get Global has announced skills speaker & regular **BEN** contributor Andrew Klein will present at its newly introduced Inspirational Corner on 20 Jul.

Klein will also be on hand to assist attendees in developing their speaking and pitching skills.

Buyers can register **HERE**.

VSC seeks bem

VISIT Sunshine Coast (VSC) is currently seeking a business events manager for Business Events Sunshine Coast who can bring a "naturally refreshing change" to the organisation.

Major duties of the position will include bidding for major conferences and assisting members with event planning.

More details on the role **HERE**.



FOR event organisers seeking entertainment options with a slightly more quirky feel, the sixth annual Chicago Nerd Comedy Festival which kicked off recently might provide some welcome inspiration.

Highlights of the comedy event include a one man improvised kung-fu movie by Ryan Williams called 'Tis: A Dungeons and Dragons Improv Show', and the Comedy Dance Collective, which promises "sketch comedy & sketchier dancing".



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

Stand up and be counted

OVER the past few weeks my articles have focused on issues of professionalism and ethics in our industry. From the responses I have received it is apparent that readers agree with the principles I have been expounding. However lately the media seem to be unearthing several instances where behaviour of either principal or supplier has been very far from either professional or ethical.

We have had the unedifying example of a PCO colluding with personnel within a major client to effectively defraud the client by inflating costs which are then apparently 'redistributed' to the people and the company involved. It is now becoming a regular occurrence to hear of companies within the hospitality industry whose principals are penalising or underpaying staff. As I write this yet another 'food entrepreneur' is being investigated for paying staff well below Award rates.

If companies within the conventions and incentives (C&I) industries are themselves to be considered both professional and ethical we should be avoiding using establishments that cannot or will not justify their staff costs. We owe this to our clients who I feel sure would not wish to be involved in in this ever expanding catastrophe that is engulfing the hospitality industry.

"Easier said than done" I hear you say; and I agree. But most of us either know or have heard about the companies whose dubious practices don't reduce prices for our clients but do

increase profits for the owners. We should be prepared to say 'enough is enough'. There is little point in complaining about bad service after the event when we know (or suspect) that the staff involved haven't been paid correctly. Suppliers want our business and thus we have an opportunity to apply pressure to remedy a highly undesirable practice which has been going on for far too long.

It might even be possible to insert a clause in Australian supplier contracts that insists that all staff employed for an event are paid Award rates or higher.

According to the ABC, hospitality workers make up 7.2% of the labour market, but account for nearly 40% of anonymous tip offs to the Fair Work Ombudsman.

On Monday, United Voice launched a new digital union for hospitality workers, Hospo Voice, which offers online tools for employees to check their rates of pay, record hours, and report harassment. Jess Walsh, the Victorian Secretary of United Voice, also called for the Victorian Government to introduce criminal penalties for employers who underpay their staff.

It's time the C&I industries made it known that suppliers which do not comply with the law will not benefit from ours or our clients' business. Similarly, PCOs and Incentive Practitioners should be prepared to justify their own ethical practices and standards when dealing with clients.

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

