



## NZ is open!

**BUSINESS** events at any scale can now resume normal operation within New Zealand, after the country's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced the full relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Lisa Hopkins, CEO of Conventions and Incentive New Zealand, said the containment of the disease means NZ is now the "envy of the world".

## GIVE US A DATE, URGES EEAA

**THE** Australian business events industry is ready, willing and able to restart face-to-face events under COVID-19-safe guidelines, with a confirmed date for recommencement required from Federal and State Governments "as a matter of urgency," according to the Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA).

The strong message emerged from last week's Global Exhibitions Day webinar curated by the EEAA and streamed live from the ICC Sydney studios, which attracted more than 800 participants.

EEAA CEO Claudia Sagripanti said the event helped to showcase the business event sector's contribution to trade and investment, new product launches and innovation as well as employment, networking and domestic & regional visitation.

"Exhibitions and business events are the key to rebuilding economies, and there has never been a more important time to highlight the sector's capability



to restart business activity," Sagripanti added.

Presenters during the day included Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) Chair Dr Vanessa Findlay, who discussed the process and anticipated timeframe for official decision-making processes, and the COVID-19 industry response and recovery strategy formulated by the industry's peak bodies.

A keynote address, delivered live from Hong Kong by

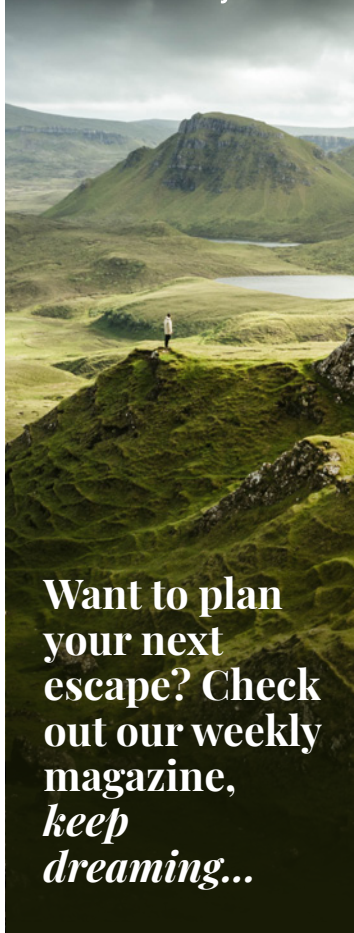
UFI Regional Manager Mark Cochrane, discussed the opening of Asian markets such as China and Hong Kong and how they provided key frameworks for Australia to follow as restrictions ease.

The webinar also included a panel discussion moderated by Rodney Cox of Delaro with Helen Mantellato (**pictured**) centring on hybrid events, crisis recovery, reconnecting with the marketplace and rebuilding buyer confidence.

## Today's issue of BEN

*Business Events News* today has two pages of news.

## Travel & Cruise Weekly



Want to plan your next escape? Check out our weekly magazine, *keep dreaming...*

## MEA evolves

**MEETINGS** and Events Australia (MEA) has announced its first ever virtual conference will take place on Thu 16 Jul.

Titled **EVOLVE:RENOVATED** the event will utilise the new Events Air OnAIR solution (**BEN 02 Jun**) to offer "a world-class educational program aimed at preparing the industry and its people for the return of events in a new era".

A full-day program will offer keynotes, fireside chats and expert panels in bite-sized 30 minute sessions.

Sponsorship and virtual exhibition packages are also on offer - [evolve2020.com.au](http://evolve2020.com.au).

## Catch up on the news of the week



Travel Daily

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**THE** COVID-19 closure of the business events sector is having effects right across the global economy - including significantly reduced consumption of wine during conferences, meetings, incentives and all those networking events.

However officials in France have come up with a solution for the undrunk alcohol - they have organised for it to be turned into hand sanitiser.

Winemakers across the country have been struggling not only with coronavirus but also the introduction of heavy tariffs by the Trump administration as part of a trade war.

A special scheme has now been approved by the European Commission, allowing 33 distilleries to collect 200 million litres of unsold wine and turn it into either ethanol or hydro-alcoholic gel.

The exceptional measure is required because vintners need to free up space for this year's production.

Unlike the usual high prices paid for french vintages, winemakers in areas such as Burgundy, Bordeaux and Champagne will be paid €0.78 (about A\$1.30) per litre for "appellation" wine linked to a specific region, and €0.58 (A\$0.96) for non-appellation wine.

## Gold Coast inspiration

**DESTINATION** Gold Coast Business Events has produced a special video showcasing the hard work happening behind the scenes as the region eagerly awaits the return of conferences and meetings.

"Whether it's being creative or excitedly dreaming up new ideas to venues ensuring everything is spick and span, the Gold Coast will be ready and waiting when the time comes to meet again," the video promises - see it online at [businesseseventsnews.com/videos](https://businesseseventsnews.com/videos).

## IBTM postponed

**REED** Exhibitions Mexico, organiser of IBTM Americas, has announced that this year's event will be postponed due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19.

Originally scheduled for 26-27 Aug in Mexico City, the show will evolve to a "2.0 version that offers the opportunity to continue delivering our mission through an always-on 365-day platform to do business, to network and to learn from each other," according to Show Director David Hidalgo.

The revised IBTM Americas will be a mixture of online and off-line marketing and sales opportunities, the organisers said.

IBTM Americas is planning to hold its next face-to-face edition on 19-20 May 2021 in Mexico city - see [ibtmamericas.com](https://ibtmamericas.com).

# 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**.

## The Jacinda Effect

**WELL** it's a few months into the 'Isolation age' and we've all probably learned a lot about ourselves. Personally I've learned that as much as I like my friends, I prefer to be at home with the family on Saturday nights, watching Netflix. I've learnt that this is the golden age for dogs. Pebbles the Schnoodle has never been happier. And I've learnt that I love gin & tonics even more than I thought.

Despite not attending a live conference for 3 months, I have actually learnt a lot more (as we all have) about online conferencing. I've done webinars and online presenting for many years, but never as much as this new normal has dictated.

One of the main things I've observed (from both a presentation skills and a leadership perspective) is that the best leaders have embraced the opportunities 'presenting from home' offers. For the first time ever, we have been able to observe our teams and leaders in a totally authentic environment - at home, in their lounge rooms, in 'normal' clothes, often with their partners, children or pets milling around.

On Zoom calls we've observed each other's

bookshelves, kitchen benchtops, backyards and paintings on the wall. And the combined effect, judging by the many conversations I've had with clients and colleagues, is that it has only made these people more authentic, more engaging, more human.

I call it "The Jacinda Effect" (I loved the COVID-update / state of the nation address she gave from home in her hoodie and ugg boots) - the ability to be simultaneously professional and authentic, vulnerable and totally real. I've always felt that the best conference presenters are those who appear totally authentic, often a little raw and rough around the edges - and this new 'at home' age, has only strengthened my opinion.

So in the future, let's remember our isolation observations and whether you pitch or present from a board room table, in a client's office, on a conference stage or from your living room sofa - ditch the bland, vanilla 'corporate vibe' and just be yourself, throw in a relevant story about your kids or life outside of work - show your real personality and just own being 'at home'.

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](mailto:andrew@lunch.com.au) or visit his website at [www.andrewklein.com.au](https://www.andrewklein.com.au).

