



## TA PLOTS BUSINESS EVENTS REVAMP

**TOURISM** Australia (TA) is taking the breathing space afforded by the COVID-19 downturn to look at a possible revamp of its marketing of business events.

Speaking at the first of a series of weekly industry webinars being convened through the coronavirus crisis last week, Tourism Australia MD, Phillipa Harrison (**pictured**), said "like all other sectors, business events has been hit really hard".

However, "the great thing about business events are that they are planned very long term, so we are actually seeing requests for the bid fund coming through at the moment for subsequent years.

"So while all activity is paused right at the moment, a lot of it is being postponed, rather than cancelled, which is great, so that speaks to future demand".

Harrison said the hiatus gave the opportunity to "have a look at what the business events world looks like, and to really revamp our marketing and the way we speak to global customers".

On the wider issue of tourism and travel in the post-COVID-19 world, Harrison said the key objective is to make sure that Australia is top of mind.

"Once the panic is over, and people get settled in their new situation of isolation and



social distancing, we believe there will be an opportunity to keep the conversation going, reaching out an Aussie hand of friendship.

"It's possible we may even give our future visitors the opportunity to dream," she said.

The Tourism Australia MD said other key issues relate to aviation, and ensuring that, as flight networks start up again, Australia is one of the key destinations included in the plans of resurgent carriers.

She said TA was already working on packages together with airports and the various States and Territories "to make sure airlines come back to Australia as a first priority".

Harrison also confirmed that Tourism Australia would continue its nascent domestic marketing push, initiated after the Jan bushfires, for the time being.

"Our Holiday Here This Year message really resonated, so we plan to go back into the market and scale that up.

"Then we will go back out internationally when it's appropriate, with Still Nothing Like Australia," she said.

On the distribution side, Harrison noted that interestingly during the downturn TA had already seen a strong interest in its training programs, with record numbers of participants in the Aussie Specialist travel agent program.

### Today's issue of BEN

*Business Events News* today has two pages of news plus a full page from Amora Melbourne.

### New limit of 2

**EVEN** the smallest of business events and meetings are now unable to take place in Australia, with previously introduced limits of 100 people, then 10 people now revised further down to gatherings of just two at a time.

The measure, announced by Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Sun evening, applies to all indoor settings, even private homes, with a range of state-by-state sanctions including police enforcement and fines of up to \$1,000.

Families can still visit each other, but social distancing protocols must be observed.

## New Las Vegas centre floor pour

**DESPITE** grim times due a complete shutdown of Las Vegas casinos, authorities are proceeding apace with the construction of the expanded Las Vegas Convention Center.

Last week construction workers commenced the huge process of pouring more than 55,000 square metres of concrete flooring in the main exhibit hall, as part of the new West Hall project, which will add almost 140,000 square metres of space to the existing campus.

In addition to the new exhibit hall, the expansion will feature a huge outdoor



plaza, grand atrium and state-of-the-art design and technology.

The expanded facility is currently slated for completion in Dec this year, with the concrete pour taking up to five months to complete.

A time-lapse video of the concrete pour can be seen [businesseventsnews.com.au](http://businesseventsnews.com.au).

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**VISITORS** to a newly constructed exhibition hall in Saudi Arabia will be able to take a good hard look at themselves, after the building was awarded a Guinness World Record for being the biggest mirrored edifice across the globe.

The Maraya Concert Hall in Al Ula (**pictured**), named after the Arabic word for "reflection" is a gigantic pyramid-shaped structure, with gigantic sheets of reflective glass covering all of its sloping walls.

The 500-seat venue has been developed as a "global platform where nature, culture and human heritage coexist in harmony," according to the developers.



## IBTM connects

**REED** Travel Exhibitions' IBTM division has launched a new online resource hub called IBTM Connect, with the aim of keeping exhibitors, hosted buyers and the wider industry connected through the global COVID-19 pandemic.

IBTM Connect will feature a range of regularly update content including webinars and videos from key industry professionals, as well as news and updates to allow the industry to prepare for recovery.

IBTM Events Portfolio Director, Shane Hannam, said "we recognise that this is an unprecedented period of challenge for our industry, and we're absolutely committed to continuing to provide support and education for our peers.

"Our connections and industry partnerships mean that we are uniquely positioned to create and curate high quality content from around the globe that can serve to provide insights and tangible benefits during this time," Hannam added.

Crisis management, mental health tips and more are on offer - see it at [ibtmevents.com](http://ibtmevents.com).

## Delegate Connect goes virtual

**MELBOURNE-BASED** Iconic Live is showcasing its new Delegate Connect technology, which recently turned a client's 2,000-attendee, 300-presenter traditional conference "completely virtual" in just three days.

The COVID-19 shutdown has

seen enquiries for the locally developed platform spike over 800% in the last few weeks, according to MD Jordan Walsh.

He said the system has the opportunity salvage the efforts of event organisers impacted by the restrictions - more info on 03 9034 5221.

## Get some inspiration for your next holiday

Check out the Autumn edition of *Travel & Cruise Weekly*



Travel & Cruise  
Weekly

## Partner Up

The low down on tech in the events world



## Tips to ensure virtual meetings and events success

**IN LIGHT** of the international restrictions on business and life due to COVID-19, many businesses that previously would have scheduled regular meetings and conferences are now working from home.

Virtual meetings and events offer a way to keep teams engaged and facilitate the sense of community and belonging.

These can range from business meetings, webinars and training sessions, to larger, events that involve keynote speakers and breakout sessions.

Audiovisual and other technologies are key to the success of virtual meetings and events, and this technology is keeping teams, organisations and individuals connected during a time of disruption and uncertainty.

Here are some tips to increasing the success of your online meetings and events:

### SCHEDULING

Ensure everyone is aware of the meeting or event well before it is time to connect. Depending on the scale, this may include electronic

invitations (evites), online marketing campaigns, online registration and event reminder notifications.

### VIDEO CONFERENCING

No matter the scale of your virtual event, you will need a platform to launch from. There are many brands of software available today, so scout-out the different types available.

### INTERNET

The video conferencing tool will be dependent on the quality of internet you are broadcasting from. Ensure you are using the highest-speed internet available that is capable of broadcasting high-definition video and presentations.

### AUDIO

Audio is one of the most critical factors affecting the success and engagement of your meeting, training tool or conference. If attendees cannot hear the content, if it drops in and out, the message will be lost. Engaging with audiovisual experts to consult on the requirements for your event can have a huge impact on event effectiveness.

Alison Hickling is the Public Relations Coordinator for AVPartners, an unrivalled provider of fully integrated event solutions to premier conferencing and event venues in Australia - [www.avpartners.com](http://www.avpartners.com)



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