



It's thanks to you!

HOW nice it is to get such a good response to *BEN*, in particular the accolades we receive when we are out and about at industry events.

It's a regular reaction from our readers that has been quite extraordinary.

To illustrate the point, we received a letter this week from Jane Milosovic, managing director, Insight PR & Communications, which said:

I have just received today's edition of BEN and I feel compelled to email you and tell you what a great job I think you are doing with this publication!

It is rare that I get too enthused about MICE publications, but I love the wonderful cross-section of news that you share with your readers and always find it an entertaining and informative read.

I'm sure you must be receiving some great feedback. Keep up the good work. JM

Show us the love by liking us on Facebook by linking on to the FACEBOOK icon at the top right hand side of this page. - Jill

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The games people play

THE conference and meetings market in the UK is optimistic about the long-term industry impact of the London 2012 Olympics, which have seen £17.4 million worth of contractual bookings during Games time.

The findings have been revealed in a report commissioned by The Westminster Collection (TWC), Unique Venues of London (UVL) and The Conference Bench in view of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, that brings together results from 100 prestigious venues, iconic tourist attractions and renowned hotels across the capital.

The *2012 London Venues Business Report* reveals that 87%

of venues believe that the Olympics will improve their 2012 full-year figures, with nearly half anticipating revenue increases of as much as 30%.

55% of venues saw their room hire revenue increase in 2011, compared with the previous year – a trend that continued into the first quarter of 2012, with 58% of venues reporting growth of up to 40% compared to the same period last year.

93% of venues successfully used 'value add' as a business conversion technique in 2011.

The report also includes findings on events revenue, bookings and buyer behaviour.

Pre- and post-Olympic Games business is also in positive territory, with 31 venues reporting increased revenue between May - July 2012 compared with the same period in 2011.

The average day delegate rate achieved by London venues last year was £52.31 (A\$83) while 67% of venues reported that their individual highest achieved rates were £80 (\$128) or more.

41% of venues reported that large events are being booked on average three months or less in advance, with the overall survey average revealing a lead time of five months for bookings.

Fire Walk at Outrigger



OUTRIGGER on the Lagoon Fiji has unveiled its newest product, the 'Butu Vatu' Fire Walking Arena, to a full house of resort guests.

Opened earlier this week, the entertainment arena which can hold up to 200 attendees will become the focal point for the weekly Beqa Island Fire Walking performance.

The arena will also be utilised for outdoor concerts, movies and traditional ceremonies.

General manager, Peter Hopgood, said that the new area is a wonderful addition to the facilities at the resort.

'Whilst the arena has been purpose built for fire walking performances, we also look forward to our resort choir performing at the arena,' he said.

The Butu Vatu arena was built by the resort's engineering team at a cost of FJ\$30,000.

McBean joins IHG

CATHIE

McBean has been named by InterContinental Hotels Group as its new director of marketing for the NT.



McBean will oversee the marketing operations of five hotels including Crowne Plaza Alice Springs, Crowne Plaza Darwin, Holiday Inn Darwin, Holiday Inn Esplanade Darwin and Holiday Inn Gagudju.

Reporting to Andrew Bayliss, IHG regional general manager, NT, McBean replaces Iain Ganner who has moved to Thailand as IHG area director of sales and marketing.

Crowne-ing Lord Ashley

A recent \$2.9 million upgrade to Crowne Plaza Terrigal Florida Beach Bar, has resulted in the re-launch of Lord Ashley - a newly refurbished meetings and event space with breathtaking views extending across picturesque Terrigal Beach and the scenic Haven lookout.

One of 13 event spaces at the Crowne Plaza, Lord Ashley is available for casual meetings and dining experiences and is ideal for informal celebrations and intimate weddings.

The function space has two décor-rich meeting rooms - "The Fireplace" which caters to 40 banquet, 20 boardroom, 60 cocktail, or 24 U-shape, while "The Lounge" takes 30 banquet, 18 boardroom, 40 cocktail or 18 U-shape.

AV additions to The Lounge include a new projector, screen and surround sound, and energy-controlled air conditioning.



US events agency move

US travel agency franchise group Travel Leaders Corporate has launched a new business tourism unit called "Connections - a Meetings & Events Company by Travel Leaders".

The company said that creating the separate division highlighted its ability to connect meetings participants with current and potential new clients.

It offers a "Connections" system which encompasses event registration, surveys, hotel room blocks and meeting manager reporting for clients and program participants.



crumbs!

NO sex please, we're Virgin!

Virgin Australia is getting the "mate" out of their crew's lingo.

Flight attendants have been asked to participate in etiquette classes to boost their knowledge of wine appreciation, personal grooming and body language, in order to win business away from arch-rival Qantas.

The move follows "whispering classes" that were dished out to crew on sister carrier Virgin Atlantic earlier this year to boost their "calming effect" for Upper Class guests.

VA's executive of brand and customer experience Mark Hassall has also done away with pool tables in lounges in favour of buffets and baristas to further entice business travellers and move the airline away from any association with the "sexy" look that has previously been attached to the company.

Kitchen kings star

STEFANO Manfredi from Bells at Killcare, Stephen Seckhold (Flying Fish) and Carl Middleton from Hilton Hotels lead an all star cast of exceptional chefs who will perform live demonstrations for the delegates of the upcoming Australian Business Events Expo.

ABEE is being held on 15 - 16 August at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The chefs will each cook a selection of their signature dishes in one-hour shows at the Taste Kitchen – one of the key components of the 2012 Expo that will open directly onto the Expo's show floor.

The Taste Kitchen is a popular feature of the Australian Business Events Expo and Event Director Rowan Marchingo puts this down to Australian's love affair with gourmet food.

"As Australia's awareness of food continues to grow, event managers know that they have to be able to organise and provide surprising and delightful culinary experiences," he said.

Verve's new Creative Design



AFTER five years of producing the Australian International Design Awards, Verve Creative Events decided on a different tack this year by introducing a number of innovations.

Rather than a traditional gala dinner, the event was split into two segments with the first part held in Sydney's City Recital Hall where all the awards were presented in one theatrical block.

Hosted by SBS presenter Lee Lin Chin, all 41 recipients received their awards in one 90 minute show with the Design Award of the Year presented to the creator of the Deep Sea Challenger, envisioned by James Cameron (of Avatar fame) and Australian engineer, Ron Allum.

James Cameron and the team were presented the award by the Premier of NSW, Barry O'Farrell.

After the award "show", guests made their way to the Ivy Room to celebrate their achievements.

Finalists' products were on display in a spectacular exhibition of ingenuity and innovation.

The use of Verve Creative Events' new product, VCTVexpress involved multiple cameras and highlights edited in real time.

In addition, edited video files of the presentation were provided directly for media use in weekend news broadcasts and digital versions of news media, while highlights of the entire event were available on the Good Design website by midnight.

Sun International local food procurement

AFRICAN hospitality firm Sun International says its local food sourcing program in Zambia has reduced costs for its two hotels in the country - The Royal Livingstone and Zambezi Sun - as well as helped local communities.

The hotelier has found that local sourcing of fruits & vegetables is up to 35% cheaper than bringing them in from South Africa.

This is part of Sun's corporate social responsibility commitment, making it a win-win situation.

The company aims to double its network of local suppliers from 400 to 800 over the next 5 years.

Event Awards in Sep

THE business tourism industry is being invited to attend the Australian Event Symposium 2012, which will take place in Sydney 12-14 Sep this year.

Organised by the Australian Centre for Event Management at the University of Technology, Sydney, the symposium includes a selection of 27 presentations on creativity & vision, innovation, the Business of Events, academic papers and round table sessions.

It culminates in the Australian Event Awards which celebrate outstanding achievements across the industry - for more details see www.eventsymposium.com.au.

Vic brain power bank

MELBOURNE has won the bid to host the Joint International Pancreas and Islet Transplant Association (IPITA), International Xenotransplantation Association (IXA) and Cell Transplant Society (CTS) Congress.

Announced by the Victorian Minister for Tourism and Major Events Louise Asher, the event will see the world's leading transplantation experts convene in Melbourne in 2015.

Asher said the opportunity for Melbourne to host the Congress was due to the exceptional quality of transplantation experts based in Victoria and the calibre of research being conducted in the state.

The Congress, which will be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, is expected to attract 700 delegates to Melbourne over five days and generate an estimated \$3.3 million for the state economy.

"This is yet another addition to a growing number of medical conferences due to be hosted in the city in 2015," Asher said.

"During 2015, Melbourne will host a number of significant medical conferences including the International Conference on Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Congress of the Asia-Pacific Federation of Coloproctology and the 35th Congress of the Societe Internationale d'Urologie.

"This trend is a result of the incredible bank of brain power located in Victoria and the world-class standard of research being done here," she added.

Tap the Taiwan App

YOU can find out all you ever wanted to know about Taiwan with just one-tap of the country's new travel app.

Providing access to a wealth of travel information on Taiwan, the app can be easily downloaded at no charge from in-phone App Stores or via the Taiwan Tourism Bureau website.

See <http://eng.taiwan.net.tw>.



business events news

25th July 2012

Nemonic's new website

NEMONIC Concepts, who represent a collection of premier Destination Management Companies (DMCs) from around the globe, have a new website - www.nemonic.com.au - that features all their DMC's, destinations, images, and press releases to "shine the light on inspirational destinations".

Director Sue Wallace said the company is "adding new content all the time, including video and extra news items."

Outrigger for Laguna

CONTINUING to strengthen its reach across the Asia-Pacific, Outrigger Hotels and Resorts has announced it will acquire the 254-key Laguna Beach Resort in Phuket, Thailand.

The sprawling beachfront resort is located in the renowned Laguna Phuket integrated resort on Bang Tao Bay, and will undergo renovations before reopening early next year as "one of the brightest jewels in the Outrigger portfolio," the company said.

Major award for ETM

EVENT Travel Management (ETM), the specialist event division of ASX-listed business agency Corporate Travel Management, was honoured as the Best Business Events Travel Agency in Australia last Saturday night, claiming victory in the newly created category in the prestigious annual Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) National Travel Industry Awards.



The award, presented to Tracey Edwards, Event Travel's general manager, was part of a gala dinner in the Grand Ballroom of Sydney's The Westin on 21 July.

"I am very proud of all of my team for their ongoing hard work, their commitment and dedication to our clients, and their focus on continually innovating to be ahead of the pack," said Edwards.

"The business events industry is an extremely dynamic, challenging and rewarding space to work in, and this award is just further proof that what we do for our clients and suppliers is recognised by our industry - I couldn't be more proud."

Corporate Travel Management managing director Jamie Pherous echoed Edwards' sentiments.

"At CTM we are so focused on providing compelling and innovative solutions for our clients, and our events team is no different - it is fantastic to see their dedication and commitment for their clients recognised by the travel industry with this prestigious award," said Pherous.

CTM's Event Travel Management division expanded late last year with the acquisition of Melbourne-based etm group - which in turn won at the NTIA awards in 2011 being named as Best Events and Incentive Company in Australia.

Tracey Edwards is **pictured** above accepting the award from Ian Robinson of category sponsor South African Airways.

Winning through adversity

CASSANDRA began to lose her sight at the age of eight but didn't let her condition deter her, going on to excel in sports and swimming - she was honoured with the Singapore Disabled Sportswoman of the Year Award in 1996.

She also represented Singapore in competitive bowling in Finland, Australia and Malaysia.

With Esme, her companion labrador in her life, Cassandra has become more independent, allowing her dignity and confidence to move around freely and independently, after many years of navigating using her white cane, with many falls and stumbles along the way.

Together, this dynamic duo travel throughout Asia Pacific in Cassandra's role as a motivational speaker.

At the age of 33, Cassandra, who has a young daughter Kady, is a highly accomplished and professional woman who takes her blindness in her stride.

A shining example to succeed in the face of adversity, Cassandra was the proud recipient of one of three Singapore Woman Awards in 2012.

For more info or to invite Cassandra to your event, email: lee.sutton@dynamicpr.com.sg



WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates **Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa** in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.17: How many treatment rooms are there in total at the Timeless Day Spa at Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

Email your answers to: wolgan@businesseventsnews.com.au
Click here for terms & conditions



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