



Horses for courses

AS we pack our fascinators and picture hats away for another year and bemoan the fact that the only horses we drew in the office Melbourne Cup sweep were those we had never heard of (a fair proportion of us wouldn't know the back end of a horse from the front), we bid farewell to another Melbourne Cup and for me \$20, in the full knowledge that we shall be just as well informed this time next year!

MEANWHILE, comes the welcome news that Virgin Australia and Etihad have just announced a 7kg increase in the complimentary baggage allowance offered to Economy class passengers.

Effective immediately passengers can carry up to 30kg of checked luggage on flights from Australia to Abu Dhabi & beyond.

What's more, for members of the Etihad Guest and Virgin Australia Velocity loyalty programs, the move also includes larger allowances depending on their tier.

The carriers already offer 40kg for Pearl business class and 50kg for Diamond First Class - *Jill*.



To free or not to free Wi-Fi

WITH much of the hotel industry at odds in offering free Wi-Fi at hotels, motels and resorts across Australia and indeed globally, and with the majority of Adelaide city hotels in particular charging their guests for the privilege of wireless internet access, it will come as music to the ears of the conference and business traveller that Country Club Hotels & Resorts have waived the internet usage at five of the group's seven South Australian hotels, motels & resorts.

"In the present day, the offering of free Wi-Fi is almost becoming an expectation," said Andrew Bullock, CEO of Country Club Hotels & Resorts.

"Certainly with our international guests and corporate travellers, we receive consistent requests for complimentary wireless internet to be offered, or included as part of the room tariff.

"For the time being, we believe it will offer our properties a point of difference compared with many of our competitors, particularly in the regional locations, and also for our corporate and business travellers seeking accommodation in Adelaide," he said.



The Country Club properties include the Adelaide Meridien Hotel & Apartments (North Adelaide), Adelaide Royal Coach (Kent Town), McCracken Country Club (Victor Harbor), Clare Country Club (Clare Valley) and John Pirie Motor Inn (Port Pirie).

"We do understand that in the years to come, free Wi-Fi will become the norm, however we want to be market leaders, hence the offering now.

"At the end of the day, we are pleased to offer a service to our customers that's going to save them money by choosing to stay with us," Bullock concluded.

Business With Class

SYDNEY'S Sebel Pier One is showcasing its new business incentive program and transformed conference space.

Water @ Pier One overlooks Sydney Harbour, Luna Park and the Harbour Bridge.

The conference space and special Business with Class promotion is being displayed with a full page photo spread on **page five** of today's issue.

Tangalooma offerings

TANGALOOMA Island Resort is offering a wide range of complimentary delegate offers for all conference and event bookings held between January and June 2013 - see **page 6**.

Choose from their Desert Safari sand tobogganing tours, ATV Quad Bike tours, Whale watching cruises, & Bonfire Beach suppers.

All delegates are also welcome to participate in their Wild Dolphin Feeding program.

For further information email corporate@tangalooma.com - all activities subject to availability.

How green is the BCEC?

WITH the Green Table Award for Excellence in Environmental Sustainability at the Restaurant & Catering Australia Awards tucked under their arm, the Brisbane Convention Exhibition Centre was recognised once again for its environmental leadership at a national level.

It's the second national award the Centre has received this year which highlights the Centre's achievements in the areas of environmental and social responsibility adding to the National Award for Corporate Social Responsibility received at the MEA (Meetings & Events Australia) Annual Conference in May.

Spicers comp email

SPICERS Hotels & Resorts is giving **BEN** readers the chance to win a two night luxury stay at the Spicers Peak Lodge this week.

The all inclusive prize also includes a seven course degustation dinner each night with matched wines, breakfast and selected beverages for two people (see comp box at right).

We had an issue with the Spicers email address on Monday but this has all been resolved so if you were unsuccessful in sending your entry earlier in the week email it again for your chance to win this amazing prize - spicers@businesseventsnews.com.au.

WIN a luxury retreat to Spicers Peak Lodge



This week **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a luxury retreat to **Spicers Peak Lodge**.

Located 2 hours south-west of Brisbane, this all-inclusive mountain lodge retreat offers a unique blend of luxurious accommodation, fine food and wine, active outdoor experiences in a spectacular wilderness region of Australia.

The prize includes 2 nights accommodation, 3 course lunch, 7 course degustation dinner each night with matched wines, breakfast each morning, selected beverages throughout the stay for two people.

To win tell us in 25 words or less what is unique about Spicers Peak Lodge.

Email spicers@businesseventsnews.com.au

HINT! www.spicersgroup.com.au

Terms & Conditions apply



Sell TNQ success



28 Australian and New Zealand conference and incentive organisers participated at Tropical North Queensland's Sell TNQ 2012 famil recently.

The annual event, hosted by Business Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef, that showcases the region as a business events destination was held over four days from 2-5 November.

Director of Business Events Cairns, Rosie Douglas, said the group had participated in workshops with operators to gain an understanding of the diverse array of venues, professional support, activities and incentives available in TNQ.

"Staying at Palm Cove was a highlight for the planners who gained an understanding of the value of the destination as an intimate location where conference venues are within walking distance of restaurants and the beach, and world class attractions are only a short drive away," she said.

"It follows a very successful familiarisation in April, which saw Palm Cove host eight meeting planners from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

In addition to experiencing Palm Cove's resorts, dining and nearby activities such as Cairns Tropical Zoo and bungy jumping, the group had the option of spending a day on the Great Barrier Reef or in the Wet Tropics rainforest.

"About half the group stayed on for two days of post touring in Port Douglas and Cairns."

Pictured above is Catherine Corcoran of Events Boutique meeting Molly the wombat with Cairns Tropical Zoo with Wildlife Keeper Madelaine Hall.

The Zoo hosted an Australian evening as part of the activities in Palm Cove for Sell TNQ.

AIME 2013's new tour options

AIME'S popular Hosted Buyer, pre-touring program now includes five new additions, designed to showcase regional

Victoria's premier business events destinations and facilities to event organisers.

The additional destinations now bring to 15 the number of different pre tour programs.

The new tours are:

- **Daylesford and Macedon Ranges** - a 90-minute drive from Melbourne with the highest concentration of mineral springs in Australia.
- **Mildura** - with its striking contrast of cosmopolitan Mildura from the surrounding landscape of desert and lush farmland.
- **Gippsland** - offering unspoilt beaches and majestic mountain ranges all within range of state-of-the-art performing arts centres & large-scale conference facilities.
- **Wangaratta** - known as one of Victoria's most progressive, provincial centres, a stone's throw away from the Victorian Alps with a range of new conference and business events facilities.
- **Great Ocean Road** - this roadway famous for its breathtaking ocean views and stunning beaches, makes it a premier destination for conferences and business events.

There will be time for outdoor yoga and rainforest walks, finishing with a delicious lunch at one of the region's wineries.

These new options join existing tours including Phillip Island, Mornington Peninsula, Bendigo, Ballarat and Melbourne, with all of the pre-tours set to take place between Friday 22 to Sunday 24 February 2013.

Karen Bolinger, ceo of the Melbourne Convention + Visitors



Bureau, said "We appreciate that many of our buyers travel to Melbourne for AIME from overseas and interstate, so we endeavour to provide them with unforgettable experiences and most importantly, valuable opportunities, showcasing not only Melbourne but regional Victoria's business events capabilities within a 90 minute radius of the city," she said.

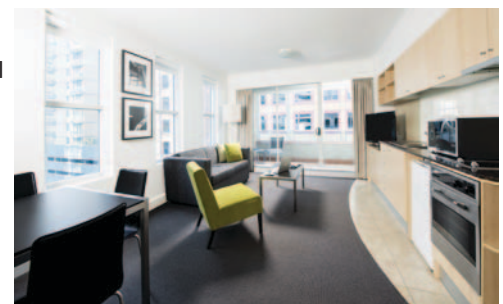
For more information on pre tours visit www.aime.com.au and follow the links for Hosted Buyers and then on to the Pre-Touring options

Unveiling Mantra on Kent

WITH the unveiling of the Mantra on Kent's \$1.5million hotel refurbishment which includes a floor-to-ceiling transformation of their 105 guest rooms, restaurant, meeting facilities, lobby and more, they are offering rates from \$234 per night in a studio, from \$274 per night in a one bedroom apartment or from \$484 per night in a two bedroom.

The major makeover includes stylish new furniture, wide screen televisions, revamped laundries, new carpet and a fresh coat of paint to complement the upgrades.

These enhancements, combined with the hotel's desirable Sydney city location close to Darling Harbour, The Star and the Convention and Entertainment



Centres and great rates for the upcoming Sydney Festival on 5 - 27 January, reinforces Mantra on Kent as ideal for business and leisure travellers.

"Mantra on Kent's comprehensive refurbishment underscores our commitment to attracting an even larger segment of meetings and corporate business in this vibrant city," said Mantra Group ceo Bob East.

See www.mantra.com.au for more information or to make a booking.



LIBYA, the North African country to which DFAT advises Australians not to travel due to its unpredictable security, is among the more unusual destinations being showcased at the 2012 World Travel Market which opened in London on Monday.

A survey reported in Britain's *The Telegraph* said of 1,300 tourism chiefs attending the conference, over half believed Libya had the potential to become a popular tourist spot.

"Libya could be one of tourism's most exciting destinations in the future," said WTM director Simon Press.

"Many destinations such as Vietnam and Croatia have repositioned from conflict zones to tourism hotspots, and there is no reason why, over time, Libya cannot do the same."

Libya features amazing ancient ruins, including those at Leptis Magna which is one of five UNESCO World Heritage Sites found in the country.



business events news

7th November 2012

Nobleza joins Les Clefs d'Or

THERE are only 40 Australian members of the prestigious Les Clefs d'Or concierge association, and InterContinental Sydney concierge James Nobleza is now one of them.

He now joins fellow key bearer and InterContinental Sydney chef concierge, David Patt, on the five-strong team.

In addition to the esteem and expertise associated with his Les Clefs d'Or accreditation, Nobleza brings more than 14 years of hotel experience to the role, having worked at some of Sydney's top establishments, including Four Seasons Sydney, Swissotel Sydney, Star City Casino and The Westin Sydney.

A concierge in Sydney for more than a decade, Nobleza has developed an enviable network of influential local contacts and an extremely thorough knowledge of the city as a travel destination.

InterContinental Sydney's concierge service relaunched in 2006, as part of a new program rolled out across InterContinental Hotels & Resorts globally which combines top-notch personalised service by best-in-class concierge teams with innovative web-based features such as pre-stay emails, destination-specific concierge videos, local tips and interactive maps.



Qld entities to merge

LEGISLATION was introduced into State Parliament last week to merge Tourism Queensland and Events Queensland into one organisation.

Jann Stuckey, the State, Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games said the merger would provide a more coordinated and strategic approach to attracting visitors to the State.

"We promised to put in place policies and processes that would revitalise the industry and we'll continue to work with owners, operators and Regional Tourism Organisations to look at what we can do to enhance the industry," Stuckey said.

Stephen Gregg, chair of Tourism Queensland and Events Queensland, said a common Board would ensure directors are across both tourism and event operations and be well placed to ensure collaboration and good governance occurs.

"As one entity, marketing and visitation opportunities will be optimised and any duplication removed," Gregg said.

Stuckey went on to say that the Newman Government's "ambitious and visionary" plans to get the tourism industry back on track had already seen significant progress being made in working towards its target to double overnight visitor spending to \$30 billion by 2020.

"The Government was continuing to work with the DestinationQ Post-Forum Working Group to help implement agreed actions signed off at the inaugural industry Forum," she said.

One day bootcamp

WANT to take part in a one day 'mini' boot camp on 'How to Speak, Train and Lead your way to success?'

Rob Salisbury, a corporate trainer, conference speaker and emcee, event host and facilitator, is holding 'Mini Boot Camps' on 14 Nov in Singapore, 21 Nov in Sydney & 23 Nov in Wollongong.

Salisbury says of the camp, "The slight edge gained by those who win or lose in sports (or business) isn't because of a low level of motivation but a lack of skill, creativity and an execution strategy.

If you want 2013 to be one of your best years ever, email rob@strategicresources.com.au.

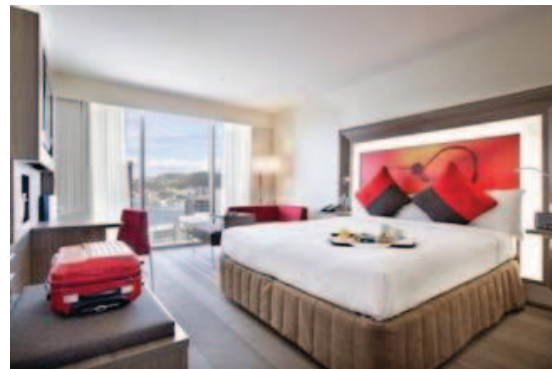
What's NEXT at Novotel Wellington

'NOVOTEL NEXT' touch – a new design concept has been incorporated into Novotel Wellington's new look rooms after a major refurbishment project.

The makeover of the 139 rooms have been designed to reflect the vibrant local arts community with new beds, designer headboards with bright splashes of colour, bold feature artwork, and even red glass splashbacks in the bathrooms to give a wow factor to the clean, white interiors.

Integrated connectivity panels which enable portable digital devices to connect to the television, iPod docking stations and wireless internet access have been added.

As part of the hotel's multimillion dollar makeover, the innovative NEXT rooms are



spacious and have been designed with a number of features to enhance the travel experience.

Novotel Wellington general manager Philip Hilton said "The refurbishment combined with the hotel's central city location on The Terrace places us in a winning position to cater to the influx of travellers coming to the city for major events such as the World Premiere of Peter Jackson's latest blockbuster film *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*.

For more information about the property or to make a booking visit - www.accorhotels.com.

Grays' Say

Peter Gray, managing partner of Motivating People, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the MICE industry.



HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN

AS I arrived at London Heathrow Airport for my return journey to Australia recently the changes there brought home to me how much had changed in the world of aviation. Alongside the new Terminal 3 is a glass edifice which bears the name 'Virgin Atlantic', emphasising the strides made by that airline. It is no longer the upstart that BA management considered should be strangled at birth (something they very publicly failed to do) but a major and successful airline. BA is now the airline that's struggling to survive.

Back in Australia we have the Virgin Group which is making tremendous inroads into the market previously considered the sole domain of the airline which was determined to crush Virgin and which has now had to make an arrangement with an airline it also considered should never have been allowed to fly here.

My worry is that the codeshare arrangement that Qantas has

made with Emirates may benefit the latter at the cost of the former.

I travelled to and from the UK and the Arabian Gulf with Emirates. The level of service both before and on the flights, the comfort (in economy), the meals and the general bonhomie of the cabin crew is something I have not experienced with Qantas for a very long time. Once a Qantas customer experiences this, will they ever want to go back to anything less? Frequent Flyer points are certainly a draw-card but are they enough? I wonder how long it will be before we see the tag line: "Qantas - an Emirates Airline"?

Peter Gray is an independent motivation and meetings consultant who can be contacted at: peter.gray@motivatingpeople.net.





business events news

7th November 2012



Face to Face with...

Stuart Nettlefold, Chief Executive Officer, Business Events Tasmania



Business Events News recently caught up with Business Events Tasmania's chief executive officer, Stuart Nettlefold. He has been in his current role since April 2010 and prior to this he was chief executive officer of Wine Tasmania (the peak body of the Tasmanian wine industry). Nettlefold has considerable managerial and business development experience in the tourism, travel, wine and hospitality industries in Tasmania and Victoria.

What does your role entail?

Working with my team to promote our beautiful state (Tasmania) as a superb destination for business events. I also work closely with stakeholders and industry organisations; focusing on the ongoing strategic development of the industry in Tasmania.

What's the first thing you do when you get in the office?

Greet the team, fire up the make believe espresso machine (we're on a tight budget) and launch into those daily tasks and meetings.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Like most organisations we operate with a limited budget and resources - but that's the way it is, so we just get on with it and make sure we have a bit of fun at the same time. I find the key to making the budget stretch is being creative.

How do you inspire your team?

Communication is key - we have regular meetings and I'm a great believer in harnessing ideas of my team and giving ongoing feedback. I would like to believe I lead by example.

Dealing with new technology - bonus or headache?

A definite bonus but at times it's a challenge keeping up with it.

What would you be doing if you were not in your current role?

Going fishing.....in Tasmania.

Who has inspired you?

I have a long list...but my family and team provide me with constant inspiration.

How do you relax?

Heading away on the boat with family or friends to a remote bay and cooking up the daily catch over a 'crisp' Tasmanian Riesling.

What makes a great conference?

The four P's - the people, the place, the product and the price.

What the most inspiring conference you have been involved in?

I attended a National Wine Marketing Conference in Adelaide in 2000. I was new to the industry and was exposed to some excellent local and international speakers along with making a number of great contacts. I seem to (vaguely) remember sampling some 'cracker' SA Shirazes.

How many conferences have you attended in the last 12 months?

I have attended three. They're a great way to connect with others and reflect on your industry. Conferences in Tasmania are particularly special because they provide an opportunity to get away from the hustle and bustle of a big city and experience the friendliness of the people and beauty of the place.

BestCities hosts workshops

A biennial event that gives an exclusive opportunity to experience one of the ten BestCities destinations; meet the BestCities partners; and learn more about their convention facilities and bureau

services - The BestCities Client Workshop - will be held in both Australia and North America in 2013; showcasing the cities of Melbourne and Houston to an exclusive group of international association meeting planners.

Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau will host the first of the two meetings from 9-12 April followed by Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau who will hold their first-ever client workshop following IMEX America 2013.

Clients attending the Melbourne workshop will see the best of this vibrant city by foot, boat and helicopter; together with site visits to some of the city's world-class venues.

According to BestCities chair Jerad Bachar, the client workshops have proven to be one of the most successful services offered by the alliance for both meeting planner and partner.

"The workshops enable clients to gain an insight into BestCities as well as a particular destination," said Bachar.

"The hosting partner showcases their city, conference facilities and business acumen to a handpicked audience and all ten BestCities partners have the chance to build a stronger relationship with meeting planners they may not have had the opportunity to meet without this program," he said.

Richard Yore, director of sales, meetings and conventions for Tourism Vancouver agreed.

"Hosting a BestCities Workshop in 2010 gave us the perfect opportunity to conduct a site visit for the Societe Internationale d'



Houston skyline

Urologie and introduce them to the principles of holding an event in a BestCities destination," he said.

"The client was delighted with the visit and left not only knowing our city better but also realising that we were definitely the right choice for their Congress."

MEA awards open

THE MEA Industry Awards that recognise excellence and best business practice in the Meetings & Events Industry, are now open.

The awards encourage industry professionals to excel in the achievement of their business and personal goals, and reward those who achieve outstanding results.

Winners enjoy considerable profile within the meetings industry and with the general buying public.

In all but Individual Awards, members self-nominate for an Award by addressing a range of criteria that are relevant to the particular category or categories they are entering.

Candidates for MEA Individual Awards are nominated by a third party such as an employer, client, supplier or colleague who is responsible for completing the written application.

All Award submissions must be submitted on official award submission templates.

The submissions are then judged by a panel of industry and independent judges.

Short-listed candidates are interviewed by telephone to determine the category winner.

Applications close 18 January 2013.

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Sebel Pier One launches Water @ Pier One

THE Sebel Pier One Sydney celebrated the launch of its new conference space, Water @ Pier One on 1 November with a crowd of more than 200 VIP guests eager to see the room's magnificent transformation. Situated at the front of the Pier and with expansive wrap-around glass windows which were opened on the night, Water @ Pier One enjoys unrivalled views of Sydney Harbour, Luna Park, and the Harbour Bridge, which all combined to present a breathtaking backdrop for the gala event.

The evening was kicked off by the hotel's general manager, Michael Sheridan, while David Lowe, the hotel's sales & marketing director was tasked with unveiling the hotel's exciting new business incentive program in partnership with Etihad Airways.

Adam Vance, Regional Marketing Manager for Etihad Airways, was aptly flanked by smart Etihad hostesses, and donated five Virgin Australia prizes (flights to anywhere in Australia) which were drawn on the night.

In a fitting ode to the Pier, the 1st November 2012 marked the 100th birthday of Pier One. Capping off the evening, the crowd sang happy birthday, toasted with Moët and celebrated well into the night.

Business with Class incentive

THE Sebel Pier One has unveiled a 'Business with Class' promotion, which will see the company of one lucky PCO win two tickets to anywhere in the world on the Etihad Network in the luxury of Pearl Business Class.

All conference organisers need to do is spend more than \$5000 at Water @ Pier One and book 10 room nights or more between 1 January and 31 July 2013, to go into the draw to win - visit

www.sebelpierone.com.au/businesswithclass

Pictured **below** are: Adriana Perabo and David Lowe from Sebel Pier One.



Water @ Pier One - a room with a *spectacular view*



Pictured **left** enjoying the company and the new space from left are: Ian Andrew Walsh, G1 Group; Jenifer Dwyer Slee, ACCOR and Phillipa Margan, Next Stage Events.

AND **below**: blowing out the candles on the cake is Nicole Downes from Sebel Pier One.



Above: Gail Bowan & Frances Maleklou, Allianz.



Above: Bob Magid - TMG Developments with Adam Vance, Etihad Airways and crew.

Below: Caroline Gair, Johanna Vaughan and Marilyn Long, CI Events



Mel Bonfield, Karen Williams, Lani Booth and Rebecca Ballatyne, Yahoo7

Right is a very happy Didi Stigter, The Ideal Event who was the lucky winner of the Etihad/ Virgin Australia prize.



Above: Sitting pretty in the circular chair from left are: Stephanie Haslett and Tegan Burford, Divine Events with Divya Hemnani and Ashleigh Dann of Forum Group Events.



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