



In Uluru

WHERE else would **BEN** be at this time of the year but at Ayers Rock Resort to attend the opening of the \$30 million Uluru Meeting Place and the complete renovation of the Resort's premium accommodation, Sails in the Desert.



The opening is this afternoon with Federal Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson MP, officiating.

For now we are marvelling at the extensive changes that have taken place and nothing more so than the state of the art Conference Centre which includes a new ballroom seating 429 and a second one seating more than 300.

The place is filling with high profile officials, stakeholders and PCOs eager to check it all out including Accor's Jennifer Dyer-Slee with Valerie Percival, David Dymmott and Michael Walker.

Today at 4.45am it was up and away for a Desert Awakening over Uluru and Kata Tjuta followed by billy tea and damper and lunch with the Minister - Jill.

BestCities attracting more

THE BestCities group of destinations says data collected by its ten members shows that meetings held in a BestCities location often perform better and achieve higher results.

A significant increase in delegate attendance across the international conference market has been noted by all BestCities bureaux with some recording numbers exceeding expectations by more than 30%.

"All BestCities partners understand that a conference's success depends on turnout, so we advise and help meeting planners recruit delegates and build attendance through a range of marketing activities; often providing access to promotional material such as brochures and videos at no charge," said BestCities board chair, Jerad Bachar.

"The destination itself also plays a key role in driving attendance and the many outstanding qualities of our partner cities combined with the expert assistance of the bureaux makes a BestCities conference almost

impossible to resist," said Bachar.

For instance the World Diabetes Congress held in Dubai last year attracted an unprecedented 15,100 delegates - 3,500 more than any previous World Diabetes Congress and almost 30% higher than what was forecast by the Int'l Diabetes Federation.

"Outstanding quality and quantity" was recorded in the EASL Annual Report following the 2011 International Liver Congress in Berlin - reaching 8,000 delegates for the first time.

It is also true of the ninth World Congress on Brain Injury held in Edinburgh earlier this year with over 1300 delegates attending the meeting for the first time; the Emergency Medicine in the Developing World Conference held last year in Cape Town achieved an increase of 33% and in San Juan, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemicals recorded a 25% increase in attendance.

In the Asia Pacific region, both Singapore and Melbourne have also recorded positive results, including the 2012 International Society of Magnetic Resonance in Medicine Annual Meeting and Exhibition in Melbourne with 5,374 delegates, 34% higher than expected and the Global Chinese Conference on Computers in Education in Singapore doubling their expected attendance.

"Our independent research also reinforced these findings, with results from the 2011 BestCities Client Survey showing that respondents rated BestCities Bureaux 8 out of 10 for delegate boosting," Bachar said.

"An unprecedented 100% of respondents also had their expectations of the host city matched or exceeded and 25% said their meetings had exceeded attendance forecasts".

BestCities includes Berlin, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dubai, Edinburgh, Houston, Melbourne, San Juan, Singapore & Vancouver.

Club Med sets PAICE

CLUB Med says it received some "strong group booking leads" during this week's PAICE tradeshow in Auckland.

The one-day event provided an ideal opportunity for the newly formed Club Med Groups and Incentive Department to introduce themselves to the NZ market, with spokesman Brendon King saying there was particular interest in the Bali, Phuket and Cherating Beach resorts.

"Everyone has been enthused to learn more about how Club Med can service the MICE business with the unique upscale all-inclusive packages that are available," he said.

Westin hosts high-profile Forum

THE largest ever gathering of national leaders in Bali took place recently during the high profile Bali Democracy Forum V.

The fifth event of its kind which was held in the private meeting rooms of the Bali International Convention Centre from 8th - 9th November, was attended by representatives from all over Asia and beyond, an event that saw them forge stronger ties and discuss issues relevant to the region.

The President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono conducted a number of bilateral meetings with neighbouring counterparts in the secured setting of Nusa Dua.

Several heads of state including the Prime Ministers of Australia, Turkey, Sri Lanka and India chose to stay at The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali resort during the forum.

Delegates had the opportunity to experience the Westin brand and some of its signature initiatives.

"My congratulations go out to all of our associates for providing impeccable service that certainly contributed to the overall success of the forum," commented Bipan Kapur, md of The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali.

WIN a luxury retreat to Spicers Tamarind Retreat



This week **Business Events News** and **Spicers** have teamed up again this time to give one lucky reader the chance to win a luxury stay, at **Spicers Tamarind Retreat**.

Set next to Gardners Falls in a stunning rainforest in the Sunshine Coast Hinterland, Spicers Tamarind Retreat offers an intimately unique experience where Thai style meets the tranquility of the Australian bush.

The prize includes a two night midweek stay in a One Bedroom Pavilion at Spicers Tamarind Retreat plus breakfast for two people.

To win tell us in 25 words or less what kind of event you would host at Spicers Tamarind Retreat?

Email spicers@businesseventsnews.com.au

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A hard act to follow

AKIN to a male fantasy, the desire to create the world's tallest building has manifested itself ever since the first skyscraper – the Home Insurance Building – was built in Chicago in 1885.

Now, the Indonesian capital Jakarta plans to take over the title of the highest building in South East Asia, currently held by Malaysia's 88-storey Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur at 452 metres, when the Signature Tower is completed between 2017 and 2020.

The Signature Tower hotel will have 290 six-star rooms, while a second hotel with 350 rooms will open under the MGM Grand Hotel and Serviced Apartments brand in a nearby tower.

The two towers will be connected on the 9th floor by a building containing a convention centre.

Delegates with dogs perhaps?

DOG friendly 5-star hotels are pretty thin on the ground in Australia, in fact we'd be inclined to say that they are non-existent, (please let us know if this is incorrect).

Good news then for pampered pooches and their owners now that Sydney's Sebel Pier One, in prime harbour front position, with its sweeping waterfront and Harbour Bridge views from its dedicated conference/function room, has opened its luxurious doors and bedrooms to our canine friends.

Guests who book through the hotel's dedicated Pampered Pets Escape Package (currently valid to 30 November) receive overnight accommodation in a Heritage room with direct access to the pier, full buffet breakfast for two and trampoline pet bed.

The hotel offers all the trappings of a pampered dog's life, including a room service menu to salivate over.

When it comes to walkies, for an extra charge the Sebel will get you a dog sitting/walking service.

Taking The Star to Melbourne

EXCLUSIVE

insights into endless event ideas and opportunities were on the agenda when a team from The Star descended on Melbourne last week, hosting event buyers and corporate event planners at an exclusive event to introduce Sydney's – and The Star's – newest event destination, set to open in January 2013.

Jakki Temple, The Star's executive director of sales, was joined by Nik Rollison, general manager of food and beverage and Andy North, director of culinary, in an informative Q&A session about the significant changes that have taken place at The Star and new opportunities which the new Event Centre offers.

Dior Coombs, bdm, Solution Red said, "It was great to be able to meet the team in person and be given the introduction to their amazing new venue – the Event Centre."

"The unique food options for



events that Nik and Andy both spoke about and the flexibility and functionality of the space make it a really exciting new venue option in Sydney," she said.

For Jakki Temple, the event, held at Vue Events at Rialto, was an important part of The Star team's strategy to connect with the Melbourne market.

"Nothing beats the opportunity to meet face to face."

EEAA/Octanorm pact

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia's (EEAA) general manager Joyce DiMascio announced a partnership with Octanorm as its new major event partner for the 2012 conference to be held in Melbourne on 4 December.

Octanorm will also launch its new energy efficient lighting system at the conference.

"We have had an enduring partnership and we are very excited about providing the opportunity for Octanorm to use our conference to launch its new energy efficient lighting system", DiMascio said.

Octanorm Australia's business manager, Bill Bell, congratulated EEAA for creating a conference that offered the industry a powerful educational forum and strong networking environment adding "We've got a great new product – it's the first LED Exhibition arm light to match the output of the industry halogen standard with a range of other features that will make lighting expo stands and displays more efficient, cost effective and flexible".

Spicers Peak Lodge winner announced

CONGRATULATIONS to Susan Crosse from Pandora who is the lucky winner of last week's Spicers Peak Lodge competition in Business Events News.

Crosse has won a two night all inclusive stay at Spicers Peak Lodge valued at \$3000 for her creative answer to the question tell us in 25 words or less what is unique about Spicers Peak Lodge.

Love the opportunity to find out for myself but the website tells me it is a unique blend of luxurious accommodation, fine dining and spectacular settings.

This week the Spicers Group is offering our readers the chance to win a stay at Spicers Tamarind Retreat – **see page one** for more information.



THE Columbus Dispatch puts our fear of dying through travel-related misadventure into some perspective.

Consider some of these alarming stories against the real stats.

- A California surfer escaped a shark that dragged him underwater until he punched it to free himself.

- A 27-year-old fell about 50 feet during a visit to Isabella Falls in Australia, suffering critical injuries.

- In Brazil, three people died when a tourist train derailed near a resort town.

Add to these capsizing ferries, crashing buses and other stories of travels gone awry, and you might start to rethink any plans you had to leave home.

But stories such as these grab the headlines because they are so unusual.

The reality is your chance of being bitten by a shark: one in 3,748,067

Your chance of dying in a fall from one level to another during your lifetime: one in 5,703

Your chance of dying in a train accident: one in 122,259.

If you're flying one of the 30 airlines with the best records, your chance of dying in a plane is one in 11.4 million.

You have a better chance of dying in a car crash on the way to the airport.

In fact, there is a greater chance of being electrocuted during your life than dying in a plane crash: one in 5,000.

"Life after all is one big series of risks.

"And some risks are worth the shot," says the website Best Health Degrees, which looked at the various ways one can die.





business events news

16th November 2012

Will ye no come back again?

IT'S known by the locals by its original name, Derry and it wasn't until the London Trade Guild decided to build city walls back in 1613, that London was added to Derry, creating Londonderry.

Three hours from Dublin and 90 minutes from Belfast, the Derry crew were in Sydney on Wednesday, on an Australian sales mission promoting this, Ireland's only walled city, as it prepares to celebrate the UK City of Culture 2013.

The first winner of this prestigious title, much is expected of Derry as it sets the benchmark for future UK Cities of Culture.

Perfectly aligned with this is 'The Gathering 2013' - a year long celebration of everything that is good and unique about Ireland.

The word is, the country is encouraging everyone to have their own gathering, be it a conference, school or business reunion, golf or sporting get-together - no event is too small and, of course, Derry has to be on the itinerary during this year when 175 events will take place, providing the basis of many ideas on which to build a conference or incentive.

Odhran Dunne, Derry Convention & Visitors Bureau in conversation with **BEN** said that the prestige of being named the first UK City of Culture had attracted worldwide conferences to the city.



"Conferences such as the World Rotary Conference, European Network Conference, Delage Landen, USP 2013 & ABCO 2013 and our temporary, 1000 capacity Millennium Forum, an indoor venue, have been an additional legacy of being involved in the City of Culture," he said.

Australians, Dunne went on to say are 8% of their leisure market, with 150,000 Australasian arrivals to Ireland expected this year.

Crowne tops list

IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) the world's largest hotel group by number of rooms in Greater China, recently opened the Crowne Plaza Hong Kong Kowloon East, which now means that by the end of this year, they will have hotels in 50 cities, with another 50 due to open over the next five years.

With 359-rooms the hotel is the second Crowne Plaza property in Hong Kong.

It offers 2,400 sqm of function space, including 11 multi-function rooms to accommodate 1,250 guests for banquets and 2,000 attendees for receptions.

Business trip advisor

CWT Hotel 360, a comprehensive range of hotel products and services that helps companies drive cost savings while improving traveller satisfaction, has launched an innovative travel review site, **CWT Hotel Intel**, allows business travellers to share hotel ratings and reviews within a secure, company-specific site.

The site not only gives access to up-to-date information on company-compliant hotels, but also provides trusted advice from fellow business travellers.

Following a business trip, travellers receive an automatic email alert asking them to comment on their hotel stay – they can give the hotel a rating and post reviews of the property so that other travellers can read about their experience and make an informed choice before booking.

Reviews, which remain in a private network, can be made only after a genuine stay.

Info on room availability, hotel facilities and details of negotiated rates, such as breakfast, wi-fi and parking, are also on the site.

Commenting on L'Oreal's use of **CWT Hotel Intel**, Corinne Delbreil, travel, meetings and events manager for L'Oreal Global Procurement said, "Our goal was relatively simple – we wanted to increase our negotiation power with hotels and improve the satisfaction of our travellers.

"So far, we are extremely happy – we know that we are providing our travellers the best choice possible, based on their feedback."

Japan sees green

A new convention centre called **CongresSquare** has opened in the Japanese city of Nakano.

Able to accommodate events ranging from exhibitions to concerts, it can host new types of conventions utilising green spaces, such as open-air meetings, lunch meetings, and outdoor parties on the deck area in an open space of approximately 30,000 square metres of lush green parkland.

The venue in Nakano Central Park features five conference rooms and a multi-purpose convention hall located in a redevelopment area close to Nakano Station.



THE Monaco Convention Bureau is part of the Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Authority, a government service whose mission is to promote the Principality and its tourism facilities.

This team of professionals aim to manage major Business Tourism projects as well as offer companies an appropriate framework for hosting events and ensuring that they run smoothly, and to provide total support throughout these events.

When you choose Monaco for a meeting, conference or incentive it really is a one stop shop destination with style, class and kudos.

Ideal for large events, it can even brand the entire Principality for you, or for smaller exclusive incentive groups a calendar of events and superb activities are available.

Within a 2 square km walkable area, Monaco provides world class hotels, dining and convention facilities blessed with the sunshine and the sparkling Mediterranean Sea.

And the surprise is the price tag! Monaco offers great value for money - for most of the year Monaco is approximately 30% cheaper than London and Paris.

As a totally free of charge government sponsored Service, the Monaco Convention Bureau provides complete advice about the destination.

It brings together all the tourism partners around medium and long-term projects, helping them to prepare marketing portfolios.

The convention bureau can help organisers with all manner of events.

Monaco is located in the heart of Europe, less than two hours by air from the major cities and offers a mediterranean climate all year round.

A range of activities are showcased including a Ferrari tour, sightseeing, fine dining experiences, cocktails & dinners at a stately home in the grounds of the French Riviera, wine tastings, a visit to a perfumery, sailing, regatta, catamaran, super yacht & speed boat rentals.

For more information on events and incentives in Monaco go online to visitmonaco.com.

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