



Plainly speaking

WE'VE all had those "what the?" moments,

when you can't understand a conversation peppered with acronyms or meaningless words that talk of interfacing, paradigms, enabling or being on topic.

It's a language that acts to conceal the real meaning of what is being said and gives the speaker or writer a superficial superiority over their audience.

This subject that came up in conversation last week at the Platinum Networking Night at the Sofitel Wentworth (**BEN** Fri).

Someone mentioned GDS (Global Distribution Systems), and when I asked what's that, Georgina Williams of Stamford Hotels & Resorts said dismissively, "Gibberish."

"I speak a lot of different languages," she said, "English, Chinese and Cantonese, but I can't understand GDS."

Once upon a time we used plain English to speak and write, while the lawyers wrote their briefs in high-flown Latin phraseology - no doubt to keep the 'great unwashed' in a state of ignorance and wonder at their expertise.

Now even lawyers use plain English - so what went wrong?

Psychologists call it 'corporate speak' - a language that belongs to a particular group, business or industry.

I'm with 1984 doublespeak author George Orwell (and I am sure Georgina is too) who said, "Simplicity is the key to good writing and dialect because language should be easy for the audience to comprehend." *Jill*



Thai tensions scare MICE

THE impact of internal political tensions in Thailand, currently on a daily basis, are likely to cause a loss in international trade and exhibition event bookings for the next few years, according to Thailand Incentive and Convention Association (TICA) president Sumate Sudasna, **pictured at right**.

"The recurring political turmoil has damaged the country's tourism image, and it is unlikely that Thailand will achieve the goal of being the MICE hub for ASEAN over the next five years," he said.

"The Thai MICE industry may grow only 5-6%, instead of 15-20% a year as projected by Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB)," he said, adding that organisations would likely choose other places for their MICE events such as Singapore and Hong Kong, or



move to other continents like Europe.

"The pattern would not become clear for another three months or so, as many events are already planned and booked, and attendees have already paid their deposits.

"It is possible some events may be postponed," Sudasna warned. "The association has no plan to adjust its marketing strategy at the moment.

"We are waiting to see how events pan out," he said.

Initially TCEB expected the number of MICE visitors to increase by 5% in 2014, up from 987,000 forecast for 2013, and revenue to grow by 10% to 96.9 billion baht.

The latest update on Thailand from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, issued overnight, warned of ongoing political demonstrations in various parts of Bangkok where the Internal Security Act is currently in force.

Dancing with stars

AFTER PARKROYAL Darling Harbour, Sydney's recent refurbishment to their rooms and to the state-of-the-art audio-visual technology in their conferencing space, the hotel has launched a 'Strictly Meetings' incentive package for their 2014 MICE and corporate meetings.

Bookers who confirm a 'Strictly Meetings' Residential Package with a total spend of \$10,000 plus between 1 January and 30 June 2014 will receive two premium tickets to Baz Luhrmann's stage musical 'Strictly Ballroom'.

Spend \$20,000 or more and they will include two premium tickets to 'Strictly Ballroom' with one night's stay in a Club Room with Club privileges.

Or for the ultimate 'Strictly Meetings' experience, spend a total of \$40,000 or above and receive four premium tickets to 'Strictly Ballroom' and two nights stay in a Club Suite.

More info at parkroyalhotels.com/strictly-meetings.

Four pages today

TODAY'S issue of Business Events News has three pages packed with the latest industry information plus a full page from AIME with opportunities to become a hosted buyer for next year's event which takes place in Feb at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

See page four for details.

ACT Tourism becomes VisitCanberra

IN an effort to better reflect who and what the Australian Capital Territory's

tourism marketing body does, the name has been changed to VisitCanberra, said director of Tourism Ian Hill.

"For many years we have been using visitcanberra as the call to action for our website and social media accounts, so it makes sense to consumers that the organisation has a similar name," he said.

Unchanged is Canberra's brand positioning as the home of the Australian story.

The new moniker (**pictured**) to be rolled out over the coming months has been developed for use both in marketing the organisation to consumers and in a corporate environment.



 Craig James	INVEST IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	 Layne Beachley
STRENGTHEN YOUR NETWORK	 ACTE AUSTRALASIA EDUCATION CONFERENCE	STAY ACTIVE! SYDNEY 5&6 DEC 2013
 Scott Gillespie	SPECIAL PRICING akelly@acte.org 40 PLACES LEFT	 Peter Harbison



Darling Harbour demolition



THERE'S just one week left before Lend Lease commences site preparation works at Sydney's Darling Harbour precinct, in preparation for the demolition of the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

According to an update from the Darling Harbour Live construction team, the interior of the buildings will start to be dismantled from 09 Dec, along with the disconnection of services.

However, due to the buzz of activity in the precinct over the holiday season, external demolition won't commence until after the Australia Day public holiday on Monday 27 January, with hoardings to be erected and works proceeding between 7am and 7pm Mon-Fri and 7am-5pm on Saturdays.

The proposed new International Convention Centre (ICC) (**above**) is still undergoing the planning process, with the latest revision featuring a 38 storey hotel with panoramic harbour and city views from "large luxury rooms".

It will have a rooftop club lounge, meeting rooms, ballroom and outdoor pool deck plus a range of restaurants and a "red carpet arrival area".

ICC Sydney will include a 20,000 square metre exhibition space

on the ground level plus another 13,000 square metres above it.

"This stacked configuration is suited to a high density CBD environment and has successfully been used in other modern facilities in Asia and North America," according to the darlingharbourlive.com.au site.

There will also be other flexible space in the centre and a 5,000 square metre outdoor Event Deck suitable for entertainment, product launches and cocktail parties linked to ICC events and exhibitions.

The construction schedule estimates that the convention, entertainment, exhibition and public domain parts of the project will be completed in late 2016.

Africa show shift

SOUTH African Tourism (SAT) has announced a "strategic alliance" between its annual INDABA travel trade show in Durban and the We Are Africa show in Cape Town.

The 'Two Shows One Africa' collaboration will see SAT become the title sponsor of We Are Africa which takes place 05-08 May - just before INDABA 2014 at the Durban International Convention Centre from 10-12 May.

We Are Africa is an invitation-only show targeting the luxury market niche, with the alliance linking its exclusivity with INDABA's scale as a "premier mass market tradeshow that attracts local and international buyers," the groups said.

Each show will have a distinct proposition and it's expected that selected hosted buyers will attend both events.

Marriott's mobile check-in

MARRIOTT Hotels, the signature brand of Marriott International, has made its mobile check-in available worldwide in 19 countries, with five in the Asia Pacific market including Australia.

Representing the broadest mobile offering of its kind in the lodging industry, Marriott Rewards members, who have downloaded the app can check-in through a smartphone as early as 4 pm the day before arrival, receiving an automatic notification when the room is ready.

On arrival, guests simply go to the expedited mobile check-in desk where a key card will be ready and waiting.

MEANWHILE Marriott is also introducing a number of initiatives to "refresh meetings".

Rolling out globally in early 2014, innovations include the new "Red Coat Direct" app which allows organisers to adjust and edit their meeting requests and preferences at the touch of a button, and without even leaving the meeting room.

New meeting spaces with stylish design, natural light, flexible seating and web-enabled technology will enable planners and delegates to focus on their meeting objectives.

Marriott properties in Munich and Amsterdam already feature the new design, with London Kensington Marriott and Paris Marriott Rive Gauche to follow early next year.

Affendy joins Tourism Malaysia Perth

AMMELIA Affendy is to replace Wan Sara Wan Teh when she takes up the role as deputy director for Tourism Malaysia Perth.

Affendy has worked with the organisation since 1990 and joins the Perth office team of six on a three-year contract, after completing a role as senior tourism officer in the Tourism Malaysia Sarawak office in Kuching.

In this new role she will assist Kamilia Hani, director of Tourism Malaysia Perth with driving visitors to the country and increasing awareness of Malaysian products.



THERE are 101 things to do on Norfolk Island that would take you a month of Sundays to do, so here are some we prepared earlier!

- Explore the World Heritage convict ruins at historic Kingston.
- Drive to the top of Mount Pitt for an extraordinary 360° view of the island.
- Visit the liqueur factory for free tastings.
- Experience the Bounty Day celebrations (yearly 8 June)
- Take a day trip to Phillip Island, one of Norfolk's outer islands.
- Hire a kayak and view the amazing lava tubes that run down the sea cliffs.
- Visit the Cyclorama, a 360° panoramic painting of the island's history.
- Swim and snorkel at Slaughter Bay and walk the reef at low tide.
- Attend a NI church service and experience the renowned sing-a-long to traditional island hymns.
- Watch the cargo boat unload when it brings in goods to this remote place (limited visits throughout the year).
- Visit Sweeties the chocolate factory.
- Visit the Brewery and taste the local brews.
- Book a tour on Christian's glass bottom boat.
- Book a progressive dinner where you will enjoy a four-course meal with four different families, in their homes.
- Mix with locals at the Mini Bar.
- Visit the Liquor bond to purchase duty free liquor – show them your airline ticket and get a further 30% discount.
- Hire a bike and cycle around the island and come back next year to do the rest!

Christmas at Crown

CROWN Perth is looking forward to a big festive season, with special menus on offer at the wide array of upmarket eateries such as Nobu Perth, Modo Mio and Bistro Guillaume.

The Atrium Buffet is already sold out for Christmas Eve and lunch and dinner on 25 Dec.

See www.crownperth.com.au.



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Polar snorkelling

THE ultimate incentive reward for high flying adrenaline seekers can be found in the pages of Australian adventure travel specialist World Expeditions' newly launched 2014-15 Polar brochure.

It brims with great new voyages to Antarctica, The Arctic and Russia which include cruising, kayaking, diving, snowshoeing, mountaineering and for the first time, polar snorkelling.

These interactive experiences where you step off the boat and into the surreal world of the Polar Regions are, they say, like no other.

Where else can you swim through crystal clear waters in specially designed waterproof snorkel-drysuits?

Check them out on
www.worldexpeditions.com.

VIP Christmas invite

THE

opportunity to shop for corporate Christmas gifts with a glass of champagne in hand and some nibbles, is

part of the MLC Centre Sydney VIP Christmas shopping event this Thursday 5 December from 5-8pm.

Enjoy a 10% discount on purchases at The Special Delivery Company when you shop for beautiful bespoke hampers, from their ever-growing range of innovative products.

The Centre's invitation only event will feature exclusive one night only offers when you can eat sweet treats by Patisserie, enjoy cheese tasting by Simon Johnson and a charcuterie station by salts meat cheese, sip festive drinks brought to you by roaming waiters, listen to live music and get into the swing of the season.

The Special Delivery Company would love to see you - to attend contact them on 0406 966 238.



Tune in, switch off

THE first intensive detox and wellness retreat to launch in Australasia, Aro Hā, is to open in New Zealand, in January.

Located 35 minutes from Queenstown, just outside the small town of Glenorchy and overlooking Lake Wakatipu, Aro Hā is a NZ\$30 million complex purpose-built to combine leading-edge architecture, permaculture principles and sustainability.

A typical day begins before 6am with sunrise Vinyasa Yoga followed by a 3-4 hour sub-alpine hike, dynamic strength training, meditation, therapeutic massage and other featured programming.

Time can also be spent with sessions in the contrast hydro spa, which includes infra-red or Finnish saunas and outdoor hot and cold pools.

Specially created cuisine has been created with detoxification in mind and limits guests to a maximum of 1200 calories daily.

Alcohol is off the menu!

Pricing for a 5-day Enrich and Invigorate retreat starts at NZ\$4550 pp and 7-day Delve Deep retreat at NZ\$6250 pp, land-only, fully inclusive.

See www.aro-ha.com.



Getting to Know: Shanghai

by: Jill Varley

SHANGHAI, a metropolis of 23 million people (think the entire population of Australia) is a city with an ever-changing landscape. It's where some 30,000 buildings soar 20 storeys or more on the Pudong side of the Huangpu River, once the preserve of farms and villages.

It's a city that throws up surprises, such as the fact that it has a Chinatown. Hello! Don't they know they're part of China? Our guide talked of China as if it was a foreign country and when questioned he proudly pointed out, "We are more like Hong Kong."

A key destination for MICE events, Shanghai is boosting its appeal to this market by delving into its fascinating past for answers. Among this appeal is 1933 Shanghai, a converted abattoir in the city's Hongkou district that now hosts colourful parties, Ferrari F1 events and grand banquets.

Another conversion is on the site of World Expo 2010, a disused power station, today powered by solar panels and used as a museum of contemporary art and host for many events. And all along the historic Bund waterfront is a growing number of ritzy bars and restaurants.

Major projects planned for completion by 2015 include new hotels on the World Expo site, mainland China's first Disney Resort and the country's tallest tower and the world's highest hotel. Also planned for completion within the next three years is the Shanghai Hongqiao Convention and Exhibition Centre, being which built at a cost of \$US3.65 billion.

There are excellent conference hotels like The Westin Bund Center, Shanghai with 570 guest rooms and 15 meeting venues with a total of 1,650 sqm of space or the Le Royal Meridien in east Shanghai with 761 rooms and suites and close to the shopping mecca of Nanjing Road.

A must on a tour of the city's intriguing sights is the affluent dining and entertainment district of Xintiandi, in the location of the first congress of the Communist Party of China. Another is the Old French Quarter Tiaozifang, where buildings, alleys and streets remain much as they were.

Of course a tour of Shanghai wouldn't be complete with a visit to the Yuyuan (Yu Gardens) an oasis in the middle of the city, while for different and authentic dining experiences Lost Heaven is a must with its distinctively Tibetan influences. There's Shanghai Min, one of the city's most renowned restaurants and Tang Dynasty, another restaurant on the must try list. All with large banqueting space.

End all of this with an evening cruise on the Huangpu River with its spectacular neon lights and you'll get a smattering of what Shanghai is all about.



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