



Naming names

DON'T you just love a place where everybody knows your name?



All power then for Crown Plaza Changi Airport, where, with such a turnover of guests going to and from the airport, remembering names might be considered challenging.

Not so for the hotel staff. Admittedly, I had been there three days, but they were Ms Varley-ing me from the get go.

Talking of long staying guests, the general manager (Mr) Sunshine Wong, who is as sunny as his name (and that's another story), said they have a guest who has been staying at the hotel for two years!

With the Tom Hanks movie 'The Terminal' in mind, I asked if the person might be trapped in the airport hotel?

"No," he laughed, "she is on secondment to a business nearby and has another two years to go."

May I say the Herman Miller chairs in Crowne's conference rooms (pictured) are not just as ergonomically correct as a chair can be, but design-wise, they are standouts.



MEANWHILE it was a real gabfest when Bruce Ryde and I caught up in Singapore last week.

Well known in the hospitality industry, he has been living in Asia for the past 11 years.

Just back from a stint as gm Intercontinental Hotels in China, he is now based in Singapore as director brand management Asia, Middle East & Africa.

It's time you came home Bruce!
 Jill

UTS' new biz events venue

THE University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) has said it would like to attract interest from business events visitors with its new Business School building, due to open in February next year.

Business School dean Professor Roy Green told **BEN** while its major strategy remained that of a university, promoting education and research capabilities, UTS wanted to get involved in helping Sydney promote business events generally and specifically, host events relevant to its research



and education mission.

The \$180m, Gehry-designed building would have a 240 seat auditorium as a possible event venue, and had already fielded enquiries and locked in a number of events, Green said.

The university said it could attract up to 24,000 interstate and 2,000 international business visitors annually, the *AFR* reported.

Credit: Gehry Partners LLP

Hanoi's highest hotel

AT ITB Asia, Worldhotels welcomed the highest hotel in Hanoi, the Lotte Hotel Hanoi to its portfolio of properties.

Located on the upper floor of a new 65 storey skyscraper building, the five star international MICE venue offers 318 rooms and three function rooms that include a Crystal Ballroom with capacity for 1200.

Destination Port Stephens changes

DESTINATION Port Stephens has undergone a raft of changes including a new ceo in Janelle Gardner and a new board of directors.

Gardner was appointed interim gm as part of a restructure and new look for the organisation (**BEN** 06 Aug) and had worked in the tourism and events industry for more than 15 years, the organisation said.

The new board was chaired by Michael Aylmer with David Nye as deputy chair.

The organisation also won a \$92,500 grant from the NSW government Regional Visitor Economy Fund to expand its destination promotion, it said.

New name for Port Douglas biz ev

PORT Douglas Incentives has been relaunched as Business Events Port Douglas in a bid to drive growth and opportunities in the conference and incentive market in the region.

The mix of business events had changed since its formation, with the majority now domestic corporate conferences, chair Natalie Johnson said.

MEA directors elected

THE new board of directors for Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) has been elected, with Lateral Event Management ceo Simon Baggs as chair.

Vice chair is Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre sales, marketing and communications manager Anne Jamieson and treasurer is Wise Connections founder Susan Ryman-Kiernan.

Elected directors are Scene Change Tasmania's Ian Whitworth and Waldronsmith Management Kate Smith.

Luxperience rebrands

LUXURY travel trade show Luxperience has rebranded and launched a re-designed website.

Marketing and buyer relations director Michelle Papas said the re-brand reflected the show's commitment to providing a relatable platform for clients.

Luxperience 2015 had a planned 56% increase in trade buyer attendance, Sales and Partner Alliances director Eric Lewanavanua said.

Double Bay opens early

INTERCONTINENTAL Sydney Double Bay has confirmed it will open early on 06 Nov.

The 140 room hotel was previously due to open on 15 Nov (**BEN** 26 Sep), and reservations are now open.



MOVEMBER will see multitudes of males growing mo's to raise funds for the Movember Foundation's programs and to encourage community awareness and support around men's health.

Amadeus IT Pacific men are putting out the challenge to the travel industry to raise funds for the cause. The person who raises the most money will win a Shaving Brush Travel Kit.

It's not too late to join - register at au.movember.com (add your company name after your name and choose to join the Amadeus IT Pacific team).

Email your before and after pics and progress updates to mocomp@traveldaily.com.au and we will showcase them on Facebook and in **BEN**.

Get involved as an Amadeus Mo Bro! Click **HERE** to learn more about the program.

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Accor's digital MICE offer

ACCOR has launched its five year, €225m (AUD\$322m) digital strategy, which involves a business events focused program.

The strategy involved eight programs, with customers starting to see results by next year, Accor said.

One such program was 'Mice and BtoB', which would develop digital solutions for businesses including online booking of

seminar facilities, Accor said.

Other programs included the 'Seamless Journey', which would allow electronic payment, one click booking and online check-in, Accor said.

The plan was Accor's response to digital challenges and aimed to incorporate digital technology throughout the customer journey, it said.

The Shang's \$8M Club

SYDNEY'S go-to hotel, the Shangri-La, is about to unveil its \$8m Horizon Club refurbishment.

Promising a new level of personalised service, the 90 hotel rooms of the new Club on the hotel's top five accommodation levels will reopen in stages from the middle of this month.

They will be among the biggest hotel rooms available in Sydney, with the largest at 242 sqm.

NZ on show



NEW Zealand will be on show at both the PCO Association Conference and AIME 2015.

Conventions and Incentives NZ (CINZ) said its largest ever contingent would attend the PCO Association Conference this month, with 12 suppliers on hand, including first timers the Dunedin Convention Bureau and the Nelson Convention Bureau.

CINZ was also collaborating with Tourism NZ and 12 suppliers to show the country off at AIME next year, it said.

This was the ideal showcase to update the industry about infrastructure projects set to start, CEO Sue Sullivan said.

New ITB exec director

KATRINA Leung is ITB Asia's new executive director, effective as of 01 Nov.

Leung was taking over from Nino Gruettke and would be responsible for leading the show and developing Messe Berlin's regional business, the company said.

Prior to this, Leung was country md for Terrapinn Asia.

There was a record attendance at the show this year with 9,650 visitors, it said.

Crowne Plaza Plays to Win

A CAMPAIGN that draws parallels with the sporting world by visually linking business to sport has been launched by Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts.

The integrated marketing campaign 'Business is a game. Play to win', promoted via digital and out of home channels, positions the hotel brand as the best choice for a business traveller.

IHG director brand management AMEA Bruce Ryde said the company knew that travellers needed to be at the top of their game, every day.

"They can't afford to lag behind because of the constant strain of travel.

"At Crowne Plaza, we know that the world of business in very similar to the sporting world, and we want to help our guests succeed and progress."

The media for the campaign is targeted to travellers across their business day as they travel to and from the office, with messages placed throughout the environment, including lift and lobby screens as well as in major airport lounges.

Business travellers are also offered a suite of services, including a dedicated business and events teams.

Industry appointments

BUSINESS Events Victoria has appointed Adeline Keh as sales executive for the organisation.

Keh had been with the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau in a business development role for more than eight years, and had business to business sales experience in the business events industry, it said.

Convention and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ)

has a new Meetings exhibition manager in Katy Hartnett (pictured).



Hartnett had more than 20 years' experience in event, conference, exhibition and sponsorship management in the UK and NZ, CINZ said.

Hartnett started today, replacing Gail Hendricks, who joined the InterContinental Hotels Group New Zealand national sales team, a spokesperson for CINZ said.

Outrigger Resorts Australia has appointed Paul Brent as director of sales, Australia.

Brent had more than 20 years' experience in sales and marketing, including senior roles for Wyndham Hotel Group.



Events ben Calendar

BEN's calendar details events at various venues across Australia.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@businessesnews.com.au.

3-9 NOV

7th ISCA Congress;
Jenolan Caves;
www.i-s-c-a.com/event/39-isca-7th-congress

9-13 NOV

Asia-Pacific Rainforest Summit;
Sheraton on the Park, Sydney;
www.environment.gov.au/rain-forest-summit

12-13 NOV

3rd Annual NHMRC Symposium on Research Translation;
Sofitel Melbourne on Collins;
www.nhmrc2014.com

12-19 NOV

IUCN World Parks Congress 2014; Sydney Olympic Park;
www.worldparkscongress.org

Hunter Conference imagined

THE Hunter Valley Conference and Events Centre is on track to open by 30 Jan and as such, Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley has shared artist impressions of what the Centre will look like (pictured).

Previously, the Centre was due to open late this year (**BEN** 08 Aug).

Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley gm Robert Coates said the first function for the venue was booked for February and it would be "full steam ahead from then on".



The Centre would have a combined 2,000 sqm of pre-function, meeting and exhibition space when open, the company said.



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crumbs!



IF YOU'RE heading to New Zealand for a conference or incentive in the next little while, you'll undoubtedly see Air New Zealand's new safety video, which it is calling the 'Most Epic Safety Video Ever Made'.

It has clocked up 9m views so far and features cameos by 'What We Do In The Shadows' director Taika Waititi, Sir Peter Jackson and Elijah Wood, and now has a brother in the newly released behind the scenes footage.

This latest offering from the tourism coup of the century could form a great guide to themed tours and places to visit (likely what Air NZ had in mind), so for any event planners pondering Aotearoa, take a lookie by **CLICKING HERE**.

It also features such classic Kiwi moments as Waititi chasing Dean O'Gorman (Fili) across the South Island's plains while shouting "You've changed, bro!"



Perth Convention Bureau AGM

THE Perth Convention Bureau's (PCB) annual general meeting (AGM) is set for 17 Nov at Crown Perth.

PCB members can RSVP by 07 Nov by emailing Elizabeth Wessels at:

ewessels@pcb.com.au

Giving Preference



WORLDHOTELS announced a strategic partnership with Preference Hotels at ITB Asia.

Managed by TAUZIA Hotel Management, Preference Hotels is taking collaborative efforts to bolster Worldhotels' presence in the rapidly growing Indonesian market.

A network of newly developed hotels distributed across Bali, Bandung and Lombok will welcome guests to the 75 room Preference Rumah Luwih, Gyanar, Bali when it opens in March 2015.

Worldhotels' executive vice president Asia Pacific Roland Jegg said with the partnership, the company was strengthening its expansion across the region.

Pictured from left is Kristin Intress, Worldhotels, and Marc Steinmeyer, TAUZIA Hotel Management.

Corp buyers up at ITB Asia

ITB Asia saw a 19% increase in the number of corporate buyers, according to executive director Nino Gruettke.

The event targeted both business travel and leisure, compared with ITB Berlin which was mostly leisure, Gruettke said.

He said this year's show had seen the best buyer-to-seller ratio and the biggest contingent of Chinese buyers.



FACE : FACE

Maiko Zenki

Director

Japan National Tourism Organisation



Business Events News recently caught up with Maiko Zenki, director of the Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO), who has been with the organisation for two years.

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

Make myself a cup of tea and open the brochure room where we keep the Japan brochures.

What analogy best describes being director of Japan National Tourism Organisation and why?

Juggler. There are so many things happening at the same time and you have to keep things going non-stop.

How important is the Australian business events sector to Japan?

How often does JNTO deal with MICE business and enquiries?

MICE business going to Japan is growing rapidly. We get RFPs every now and then. We have noticed that there is an increase of interest in having site inspections in Japan, as an incentive destination.

We've heard about the Robot and Maid cafes, but what secret tourist attraction would blow Australian tourists' minds?

There are so many quirky, interesting themed restaurants in Japan such as Ninja Restaurants, prison restaurants, Sumo stand restaurants, cat cafes etc.

You could also try hands on wax replica food making.

Just simple things such as going to the country side or riding on bullet trains while savouring a local bento lunch box is a whole brand new experience.

What one thing makes Japan stand out as a business events

destination? What could the sector do better?

The contrast between the traditional and the cool/modern culture. Japan could do better in renovating the infrastructure such as venues and facilities. However, there are many new five star hotels opening in large cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka, and those hotels can accommodate high-end incentive groups so you could really look into using these venues.

What one Japanese phrase should Australian visitors learn to make instant friends in Japan?

Our Aussie staff recommended "Ichigo Ichie" (一期一会) which means treasure every encounter, for it will never recur.

What's the most memorable business event you've ever attended and why?

A business event at Glass Pyramid in Moerenuma Park in Sapporo (Hokkaido) designed by

Isamu Noguchi. The venue was beautiful and unique, the hospitality was outstanding and the food was aesthetically presented using local ingredients.

What's one historical meeting or event you wish you could have attended – and what advice would you have given the organisers?

Not actually a "historical" meeting, but it might have been interesting to witness the "Last Supper" as the 14th guest. Maybe organise a name plate in front of each apostle.

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