

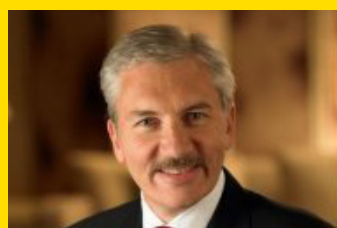


Adieu

THERE are people we admire and feel a special affinity with.



Ashley Spencer, Hilton Worldwide's vp for operations for Australasia was one of them: a consummate hotelier with an engaging wit and ready laugh.



I interviewed him a few years ago in the boardroom at the Hilton Sydney and I still count it as my most memorable.

He was new in the job and living at the Hilton Sydney, fit as a fiddle and pounding the streets of Sydney before the city woke up.

I think I spent most of the interview laughing.

His death after a courageous battle with cancer (**BEN** 13 Apr) came as a shock and has saddened his friends and colleagues.

Described by Michael Bourne, area gm QT Hotels and former gm Hilton Melbourne and Hilton Sydney, as a truly great man and a truly great bloke, Bourne said, "Ashley Spencer was astute and wise, approachable and humble; a hotelier of the highest standard and a quietly inspiring leader.

"His success came as no surprise to those who worked with him nor the fact that he was universally respected and admired, he is sadly missed."

Another former employee Margie Stewart, Careers Australia industry development manager said, "Ashley was an inspirational leader who was admired and respected by all.

"He was one of the most professional and charismatic people in our industry."

His funeral service will be held at St. Swithuns Anglican Church Pymble on 18 Apr at 10am. *Jill*

23 events for ICC Sydney

BUSINESS Events Sydney has secured 23 international conferences for the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) before its opening in December next year.

A Business Events Sydney spokesperson said the events were estimated to be worth about \$165m for the NSW economy and would attract delegates who would spend about 163,000 days in the state.

Details about the two new events secured would be announced at the IMEX tradeshow in Frankfurt, the spokesperson said.

Business Events Sydney ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said a tailored, whole of Sydney approach to bidding was a key factor in the organisation's success in winning international events.



The Centre saw great potential in Asian markets for Sydney, and hoped to attract new and returning business across the range of business events, an ICC Sydney spokesperson said.

To this end, the Centre was boosting its engagement with Asia through participation in the North East Asia Showcase in Shanghai from 19 to 21 Apr and the South East Asia Roadshow in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore from 03 to 07 May.

The ICC Sydney would also host lunch and dinner presentations, and private meetings, the spokesperson said.

AFTA to host two TIE seminars

THE Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) will host two of the nine seminar sessions at the Travel Industry Exhibition (TIE).

The seminar program is free to attend.

AFTA is supporting the event, which is set to be held from 16 to 17 Jul at Luna Park (**BEN** 06 Mar).

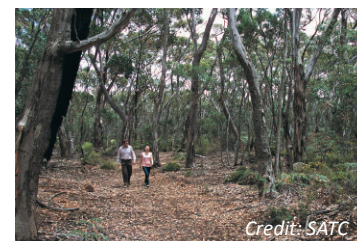
Get the credit

ACCOR is rewarding planners who hold an event in one of its hotels with a 15% catering credit for the next event held at the same hotel.

The promotion is valid for new events with a minimum of 15 delegates, booked and held until 30 Nov and used by 17 Dec.

CLICK HERE to read more.

\$2m for SA tourism infrastructure



Credit: SATC

TOURISM infrastructure in South Australia will receive more than \$2m in funding to attract more visitors to the state.

In a joint statement, the Federal Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb and the SA Minister for Tourism Leon Bignell said the funding was a partnership between the governments as part of the Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure program, and would see four projects receive funding.

These included the Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail, the Bat Observation System at Naracoorte Caves National Park and road upgrades at Innes National Park.

CLICK HERE to read more.

Disability conference update

THE funding to boost attendance of delegates with disabilities at related conferences (**BEN** 13 Apr) was awarded through National Disability Conference Initiative grants, a spokesperson for the Department of Social Services has said.

These one-off grants were given out annually, with a selection round from July to August last year.

Successful organisations were notified in February, the spokesperson said.

Those invited to apply included previously successful applicants and organisations that had enquired about funding to August.

Organisations were able to apply for up to \$10,000 in funding for the 2014-15 round, the spokesperson said.

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business events news

15th April 2015



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Best practice MoU for Singapore, Japan



SINGAPORE EXPO Convention and Exhibition Centre management company SingEx has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Chiba convention centre Makuhari Messe Inc to share information about best practice for venue management and operations.

The partnership would also look at trade events both companies could host at their respective venues, SingEx said, as well as allowing leverage of contacts and networks to attract more events.

Organisers would be able to consider both venues when it came to their events, it said.

BE Sydney to unveil research

BUSINESS Events Sydney (BE Sydney) has said it will release new research into the value of the Asian incentive market to NSW next month.

In conjunction with the University of Technology, Sydney, the research would be launched at its press conference at IMEX Frankfurt on 20 May, the organisation said.

No further details would be released prior to the event.

The research follows the release of the Business Events Council of Australia's study into business events in Australia at AIME (**BEN** 23 Feb) and the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux's report into the economic benefits of the international business events sector (**BEN** 24 Nov 14).

BE Sydney launched research looking at expenditure associated with business events in NSW at IMEX 2014.

Business Events Sydney is



attending Incentive Travel and Conventions, Meetings China from 14 to 16 Apr and then the Business Events Australia North Asia Showcase from 19 to 21 Apr.

Canberra to host Chinese exhibition

THE National Library of Australia will host the Qing: Life in China, 1644-1911 exhibition in early 2016.

ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr confirmed the event, in partnership with the National Library of China following a trade mission to Beijing.



IF YOU'RE looking for an out of the ordinary incentive or tour activity in Dubai, why not try scaling the 75-storey Cayan Tower using just cello tape and chalk?

That's what French climber Alain Robert, known as the 'French Spiderman', did last week, climbing the 307 metre tower in 70 minutes, *Associated Press* has reported.

If you're looking to feel vaguely ill, but absurdly happy about

having two feet on the ground, you can watch a video of part of Robert's ascent, made without a harness, by **CLICKING HERE**.



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15th April 2015

Chinese visa extension “critical”

THE Accommodation Association of Australia has said it is “critical” the country’s visa processes allow Chinese visitors to access Australian tourism products easily.

The organisation said it was good to see the government make moves to help growth in Chinese visitors, including extension of the online visa pilot to three year, multiple entry visas (**BEN** 13 Apr) and the Free Trade Agreement with China.

Sands special

SANDS Resorts Cotai Strip Macao is reintroducing its Meetings More Rewarded MICE package.

The package offers a choice of three hotels to stay in: The Venetian Macao; Conrad Macao, Cotai Central; and Holiday Inn Macao Cotai Central; as well as benefits including 5% off the room master bill.

The package requires a minimum of 20 rooms in a single night.

Valid for arrivals through 31 Dec 16 and booked by 30 Sep 15.

A first for The Rialto

ANYONE familiar with InterContinental Melbourne The Rialto would have engaged with its standout concierges, James Ridenour (**pictured**) and Jacob Detering.

Now that recognition is worldwide, with their appointment to new roles within the prestigious Les Clefs d’Or, the global professional society for hotel concierges; Ridenour as general secretary and Detering as assistant general secretary.



Announced this week at the Les Clefs d’Or International Congress in Argentina, they are only the third and fourth Australians respectively to be elected to the international executive committee.

Detering is the youngest person to be elected to the executive committee.

It is also the first time that two members from the same hotel have been elected to the executive committee.

Hong Kong hosts four MEETINGS and Exhibitions

Hong Kong has won the bid to host four business events which will see thousands of delegates attend.

Won last year, the events would be held this and next year, and include the 26th International Congress of the Transplantation Society with 5,500 attendees, and ASAE’s Great Ideas Conference 2015, the organisation said.

Speed dating with EEAA board

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia’s (EEAA) Young Stars and Leaders Table dinner with the executive board will return on 28 May.

Those in the Young Star program would get the opportunity to learn about a career in exhibitions and events in a “speed dating” style event, EEAA said.

CLICK HERE to enquire.

A sustaining festival



EMIRATES One&Only Wolgan Valley Resort and Spa executive chef Jason Martin will be this year’s headline speaker at the Leura Harvest Festival in the Blue Mountains on 03 May.

The Festival celebrates food from a 160km radius, promotes recycling and re-purposing, and is designed to teach how to live sustainably on a quarter-block, keep bees and more.

These are some of the sustainability practices increasingly being taken up by the hospitality industry, including Wolgan Valley, which occupies 2% of a 2833-hectare carbon-neutral conservation and wildlife reserve.



A recent study in the US found that demand for MICE travel is at its highest level since 2008 and that there is growth across all sectors of the market. At Luxperience 2015 our buyers and exhibitors will be able to capture that market with Events by Luxperience, a tailored program specifically focusing on MICE travel. With the best luxury operators and high-end buyers from around the world in attendance, the event is the ideal opportunity to build relationships and seek out new alternatives within this expanding market.

Events by Luxperience will present the cutting edge of MICE travel, with immersive experiences in fascinating destinations. It shows the ever-broadening range of experiences that are available for corporate travel as clients look for extraordinary options that will make them stand out and build their corporate profile.

Decorative Events & Exhibitions will be partnering with Luxperience for the program, and managing director Mark Magennis believes “Sydney is the event capital of Australia and it is ready to host a progressive, innovative and meaningful luxury travel and MICE show. Events by Luxperience 2015 will now attract the very best in MICE industry buyers and sellers through the successful Social Events schedule and the flexible Pre-Scheduled Appointments program.”

Events by Luxperience provides an innovative new opportunity for MICE buyers and exhibitors to meet the best of the best in the luxury experiential travel industry, giving their clients the edge when it comes to coordinating their next venture.





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