



A little ray....

SUNSHINE Coast Destination Ltd (SCDL) was in Sydney yesterday to bring the media up to speed on all that is new and happening along this stretch of coastal QLD.



And, apart from the fact that it expects to build on its double-digit visitor growth in 2014 (more in **BEN** next week), it announced the first of a number of conference wins for the year – the Pinnacle Internet Marketing Conference, previously held overseas.

It was, said business media and communications manager Liz Tuckett, "relentlessly pursued by the team!"

We also learned from SCDL ceo Simon Ambrose the answer to why Captain James Cook named the area's famous landmark the 'Glasshouse Mountains' when they are unlike any glasshouse you are likely to see. So called, he said, because the shape of the mountains reminded him of the huge glass furnaces back in his native Yorkshire.

In other news, Hyatt Hotels, responding to guests' feedback is to provide free WiFi to all guests worldwide from February. It's a move that will allow the use of an unlimited number of mobile devices or laptops in Hyatt-branded rooms and social spaces, regardless of booking method or loyalty program.

Now that's a great move. *Jill*

Canberra Airport biz ev opps

THE Canberra Airport draft Master Plan has been approved by the Federal government, with several opportunities for business events infrastructure highlighted.

The plan said there were opportunities for further conference facilities or a hotel at



several precincts including the Pialligo precinct and the Majura Park precinct.

An airport spokesperson said there was also an opportunity at Fairbairn precinct.

An Airport terminal hotel with conference facilities was confirmed last year to be a 4.5 star facility under the Vibe Hotel brand, which the spokesperson said was ahead of schedule and now due to open in September or October.

CLICK HERE to view the plan.

AIME speakers announced

AIME director Jacqui Timmins says the show has "heavily invested" in a new Knowledge Strategy for this year's event in Melbourne next month, aiming to provide attendees with skills they can use in both their personal and professional lives.

The program includes digital strategist Chris Riddell and advertising industry consultant Craig Davis.

Topics to be covered during the sessions included the global business events industry, trends and technology, organisers said.

Other speakers include media commentator Carolyn Miller and magician Vinh Giang.

CLICK HERE to find out more.

MEANWHILE AIME has confirmed the 'Australia Speaks - Celebrating 50 Years with Saxton' event on 24 Feb, to be hosted by Mike Munro and feature 20 Australian speakers and performers.

Brisbane Convention Bureau new gm

THE Brisbane Convention Bureau has a new general manager in Rob Nelson.

Brisbane Marketing said Nelson had an extensive career in major events, sports and general management consultancy, having previously been ceo of Glenelg Football Club and South Australian Rugby Union ceo.

Previously, Nelson managed marketing and commercial and group events roles for Events South Australia at the SA Tourism Commission, Brisbane Marketing said.

He started at the Bureau this week and would focus on increasing national and international sales efforts post G20 with industry partners, the organisation said.

WIN WITH CROWNE PLAZA HUNTER VALLEY



BEN, Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley & the Altogether Perfect campaign are offering one night's accommodation in a Deluxe Room with breakfast for two at Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley to celebrate the opening of the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley Conference and Events Centre later this month. Experience adaptable spaces that can be perfectly tailored for your next event at Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley, which offers the largest conference centre in the region, nestled amongst the Semillon vineyards and majestic Brokenback Ranges. To enter, send your answer to the following question to comp@businesseventsnews.com.au.

6. In 25 words or less, what makes the Hunter Valley, Newcastle and Port Stephens the perfect conference destination?

Hint: www.altogetherperfect.com.au

For more information visit www.crowneplazahuntervalley.com.au and www.altogetherperfect.com.au. Courtesy of Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley and the Altogether Perfect campaign, promoting business events in the Hunter Valley, Newcastle and Port Stephens. Prize is valid for 12 months subject to availability. Contest open to all BEN readers.



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Pei Modern
 Collins Place, 45 Collins St, Melbourne
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 (transfers from AIME provided)

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business events news

23rd January 2015



crumbs!



COULD you be just six degrees of separation away from the delegate you sat next to at your last conference?

It's a theory Mercure is using for its latest competition, which aims to take a candidate from anywhere in the world to meet a member of the Bundjalung people in Australia and prove they're six degrees of separation away from each other.

The process starts on 20 Jan with those interested uploading a one minute video of themselves.

First prize is a trip around the world staying at Mercure hotels over seven weeks, so if you're keen, **CLICK HERE**.

While you're at it, you could play 'Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon', which finds the shortest path between any actor and the toe-tapping Kevin Bacon.

The game has spawned a mathematical formula and an addition to Google which gives you the degree of separation when you search an actor's name with 'Bacon Number'.

For instance, Walking Dead fan favourite Norman Reedus has a Bacon Number of two, having starred in a film with John Ferus, who appeared in Mystic River with Kevin Bacon - go figure!

Elizabeth II's Bacon number is 2

Elizabeth II and Jim Lovell appeared in *In the Shadow of the Moon*.
Jim Lovell and Kevin Bacon appeared in *Apollo 13*.

Pope John Paul II's Bacon number is 2

Pope John Paul II and Jack Nicholson appeared in *Room 237*.
Jack Nicholson and Kevin Bacon appeared in *A Few Good Men*.

Frasers appoints

FRASERS Hospitality Australia has announced the appointment of Annette MacAndrew as its new director of sales and marketing (DOSM) for Australia.

She joins Frasers after five years in Japan as vice president of sales and marketing for Ishin Hotels Group, and takes up her new role effective immediately.

She'll be supported by Naomi Ademokun, who has been appointed to the role of DOSM for Capri by Fraser Brisbane - moving to Frasers from Oaks Hotels and Resorts, where she was responsible for driving MICE business for the group.

The Capri by Fraser in Brisbane will open in Mar, with the group's head of asset management Australia Matthew Rubie saying it will be a "terrific year for Frasers Hospitality in Australia".

White Sands Hotel approval lapsed

THE development application approval for the \$135m White Sands Hotel in Scarborough has lapsed.

The City of Stirling granted a one year extension for the approval, which lapsed on 20 Dec 2014, to Australian Property Investments Pty Ltd (APIL).

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority ceo Kieran Kinsella said to date, no application had been made to the organisation.

"The MRA welcomes the applicant to submit a new application for the development of the White Sands Hotel Site which will be assessed against the current planning framework."

APIL did not respond to a request for comment.

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Sydney's \$50m incentive win

NU SKIN has confirmed Sydney will be the host destination for an incentive trip worth up to \$50m to the NSW economy, Business Events Sydney has said.

The five day incentive for Nu Skin sales people in April 2016 would see delegates travel from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, the organisation said.

The 2014 incentive in Dubai saw 14,500 delegates attend.

Business Events Sydney ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith called the win a "milestone in the making", being one of the largest incentive wins in its history.

Nu Skin greater China regional president Andrew Fan said Sydney stakeholders had united for a cohesive, whole-of-city approach.

The bid included Destination NSW, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and Tourism Australia, with Destination NSW ceo Sandra Chipchase saying the organisation had made a "major" financial commitment to the bid.

A Business Events Sydney

Accor revenue up 3.8%

ACCOR has reported revenue was up 3.8% for like-to-like in 2014 to €5.5m (A\$7.8m).

The group reported fourth quarter revenue was up 5.1% like-for-like to €1.4m (A\$2.1m).

A total of 208 hotels opened last year and its EBIT target was revised upwards to about €600m, from between €575m to €595m, Accor said.

CLICK HERE for more.



spokesperson said it was too early to give details of the delegates' itinerary.

Business development gm Kristian Nicholls said Nu Skin had been impressed by the assistance the organisation provided throughout the bid process, and Business Events Sydney's ability to pull together Sydney stakeholders, including government and industry, to deliver the proposal.

"Nu Skin also witnessed strong collaboration throughout the city and a willingness to adapt to their changing needs."

CLICK HERE to read more.

Blue Hotel's \$5.7m makeover

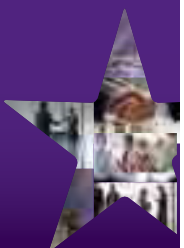
BLUE Hotel Sydney is set for a major makeover, with the new owners Hind Hotels & Properties Group submitting a proposal for a \$5.7m upgrade which will see the conference facilities refurbished.

Hind Group applied to the City of Sydney for refurbishment of public spaces, guest rooms and alterations to the entrance areas as well as meeting spaces.

Hind bought the hotel from Taj last year for \$32m (**BEN** 14 Jul), which ceased management as of 01 Nov 14.

CLICK HERE to read more.

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business events news

23rd January 2015

Groups push for P&O Cruises

CHRISTOPHER Rich has been appointed to the newly created role of corporate groups executive for P&O Cruises, signalling a renewed focus on corporate bookings for the fast growing line.

Rich (pictured) has extensive business events industry sales experience, having worked in the sector in Australia and the UK.

He was most recently an account manager at Sydney's Luna Park.

P&O Cruises is set for significant expansion later this year with the addition of two new ships, *Pacific Eden* and *Pacific Aria*.

The fleet growth will see P&O offer cruises from Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide and Cairns.

Both of the additions will carry 1500 passengers after a makeover from their current identities in P&O's sister line Holland America.

P&O will also continue to operate *Pacific Jewel*, *Pacific Dawn* and *Pacific Pearl*, meaning there will be significant capacity on offer - and a major launch event when all five ships gather



on Sydney Harbour on 25 Nov 2015 to launch the 15/16 season, the first time the city has hosted five ships from one cruise line on the same day.

P&O offers dedicated services for groups of up to 200 guests including onboard venues, event services and complimentary AV.

More China flights

DEPUTY Prime Minister Warren Truss today hailed a "landmark" new air services agreement between Australia and China, which is claimed to offer a range of growth opportunities for the Australian tourism industry.

The move provides an instant boost of around 18% in potential capacity between the countries, with Australian and Chinese airlines able to immediately operate up to 26,500 seats between Australia's major gateways and Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, an increase of 4,000 weekly seats.

An additional 7,000 weekly seats will be phased in on the routes over the next two years, and for the first time, the new bilateral also provides for a separate pool of capacity for secondary cities in China which also comprise a massive market.

Mantra to manage CHC BreakFree

MANTRA Group has confirmed it will manage the reconstructed 263 room hotel on Cashel Street in Christchurch as the BreakFree on Cashel Christchurch.

Set to reopen in April, the hotel closed after the 2011 earthquakes.

Formally known as the All Seasons, the hotel had undergone an "extensive" refurbishment and redesign since new owners Russell Property Group purchased it in January last year, with total investment of \$30m, Mantra said.

New Rosewood rep

HOTEL Representation Australia has significantly expanded its global portfolio after being appointed as the Australian general sales agent for the Rosewood Hotels Group.

The move encompasses the luxury Rosewood brand as well as New World and Pentahotels, with a total of around 120 properties.

The Rosewood collection includes some of the world's top hotels such as The Carlyle in New York, the soon to reopen Hotel de Crillon in Paris and the Rosewood Mansion on Turtle Creek in Dallas.



CONFESSIONS OF A COMPULSIVE CONFERENCE-GOER

Andrew Klein, professional MC and presentation skills speaker and director of SPIKE Presentations, presents his front line observations on conferences in a regular feature in **BEN**.

HAPPY New Year. OK, pleasantries out of the way, let's get down to the world of conferencing in 2015. Having yet to attend a conference so far in 2015 (to be honest, it's my first day back at work) I wanted to share with you an observation from my wonderful OS holiday. To be fair my observation does relate to conferencing, but this at least allows me to think back on my trip, rather than focus on the sad reality that I'm back at work.

In a trip of a life-time, we took the kids to Europe and the Middle East, including to the amazing sites of Petra, Jordan. That's not me showing off - stay with me here, this will be about conferencing.

So, I'm going with my 13 year old son to the toilet in an old run down Petra café near the main sites and on the way in, we see a young man selling sheets of toilet paper. My son is dumb-founded. "You have to pay for toilet paper?" he asks. I explain that in some countries, this is quite normal, so we pay a few dinar for some toilet paper and get on with our business.

Soon after we are back at the café, having lunch, while my son grabs his phone and hops onto Instagram, using the free WiFi offered by the Petra Café. 'Free WiFi': we see the sign everywhere throughout our travels and we think nothing of it. Most restaurants, cafés, airports, museums and certainly hotels offer it. It's standard now, expected, normal. After all, it is 2015 and we shouldn't have to pay for WiFi, should we? Certainly not in places like hotels and cafés when we are already paying to eat or sleep there?

Yet here in first-world Australia, throughout my conferencing travels over the years, staying in, let's be honest, a higher standard of accommodation than the ones I just stayed in with my family (don't judge me, the client pays when I travel for work!) WiFi is still not standard.

Many beautiful hotels in this country still charge up to \$25 a day for the 'privilege' of the internet.

As we continue to strive to attract the best events and conferences to this country, it's beyond a joke that guests still have to pay for something that, certainly for the younger generation, is like toilet paper. Something that in 2015, we shouldn't have to pay for.

So Aussie hotels, you know who you are, stop giving us a bum-rap. If you're not charging us for toilet paper, don't charge us for internet services.

Here's to a great year!

If you are looking for an MC for your next conference or a speaker/trainer on presentation skills or pitching skills, email andrew@lunch.com.au or visit his website at www.andrewklein.com.au.



AHICE registrations

THE sixth Australasian Hotel Industry Conference and Exhibition (AHICE) will take place from 29 to 30 Apr at the Grand Hyatt Melbourne, with registrations now open.

Speakers will include Carnival Australia ceo Ann Sherry, IHG chief operating officer AMEA Karin Sheppard, Royal Group md Bobby Hiranandani and Mark Bullock, manager of Indigenous Business Australia's tourism and hospitality portfolio.

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