



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has three pages of news, a full page from **Novotel Brighton** plus the latest **BEN** Christmas Venue Guide on **page five**.

New tourism website

THE Federal Government has launched a new tourism investment website designed to draw more foreign investment.

Federal Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Steve Ciobo said Australia needed to ensure there was increased investment in accommodation, business event facilities and revitalised regional offerings.

The new website has been designed to provide information and insights of possible opportunities.

CLICK HERE to view.

Accor expands into Mudgee

ACCORHOTELS has announced Parklands Resort and Conference Centre in Mudgee has joined its portfolio.

As part of the move, the hotel will undergo a refurbishment to bring it into line with other Mercure hotels.

Once finished in 2018, it will rebrand as the Mercure Mudgee.

The Parklands Resort has the capacity to host up to 1,200 people across five event spaces and features 68-rooms, a restaurant and bar and recreation facilities.

AccorHotels Pacific coo Simon McGrath said the hotelier was thrilled to expand its regional hotel and conference network.

LUFTHANSA'S AIRBORNE EVENTS

LUFTHANSA is spreading its wings into the conference sector, holding on-board events at 30,000 feet.

The airline's FlyingLab concept has been introduced as a pilot project, with several sessions already held in conjunction with major US tech gatherings.

Designed to operate on commercial flights with large numbers of delegates on board, the concept provides a pre-conference program ahead of the main event.

Though currently a trial service, Lufthansa is considering expanding the product into a standalone commercial offering, an airline spokesperson told **Business Events News**, allowing meeting planners to offer in-sky sessions on a regular basis.

Next month, Lufthansa will operate a FlyingLab event alongside the dmexo digital business conference in Cologne.

As part of the program,



attendees will have the chance to network in the boarding area before a flight from New York City to Frankfurt.

Once in the air, they will listen to five speakers who will give 15-minute presentations in an exclusive pre-conference session, 30,000 feet above the Atlantic Ocean.

There will also be room for further networking in the air.

The concept allows presentations to be watched on board by accessing a special wi-fi network which streams the speaker and their slides.

The system also allows viewers to ask questions.

Lufthansa said the concept was a perfect way to introduce delegates to a conference program ahead of their arrival.

CLICK HERE for more.

Business events double in Cairns

BUSINESS Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef has doubled the amount of business events secured for the region in the past financial year.

The surge will bring a \$45 million boost to Cairns and the wider regional economy.

In the past financial year, the business events body confirmed 46 corporate and association gatherings, compared to 23 in the previous 12 months.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland director of business and tourism events Rosie Douglas said it had been a strong year with the team chasing 90 leads compared to 67 in the previous year.

"Almost half of both the secured events and the leads were international clients wanting to take advantage of increased flight access to Cairns and the competitive Australian dollar."

Douglas added most international clients were from China, North America and New Zealand, with their events to be held from this year until 2020.



EEAA Awards now open

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) will introduce four new categories to its annual Awards for Excellence program this year.

The new honours for 2017 are the Unsung Hero Award, Innovation Champion Award, Most Creative Innovation in Event "Experience" Delivery and the Best Innovation in Event Tech award.

This year will also be the first in which the entire process will be administered - from submissions to judging.

The new awards are designed to recognise the growing importance of tech.



The future of business events in Sydney is looking good in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read **travelBulletin**



KIRKTON PARK HUNTER VALLEY

hotel spotlight

THE Kirkton Park Hunter Valley is nothing short of charming.

From the moment delegates enter the tree-lined driveway, it's clear this boutique hotel, set on 70 acres in the Hunter Valley, offers a very different experience to the hustle-and-bustle of a city location.

"We attract companies looking for a bit more of a relaxed retreat," Patrick Swain, rooms division manager, Kirkton Park Hunter Valley told **Business Events News**.

"Groups that want to escape the city and enjoy a bit more of the country and not just have to focus on work for eight hours of the day."

The hotel intertwines country manor charm with the natural beauty of the Hunter Valley and is speckled with water fountains and serene nooks which rise out of perfectly manicured grounds.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the property is seeing a trend towards events which are designed to reward delegates, encourage their growth and bond as a team.

A typical conference will be a mix of work and play, with smaller companies often opting for a half-day delegate package followed by an onsite group

bonding activity run by Pinnacle such as an Amazing Race.

Groups have the option to pop out for a tour of a winery, including Winwood Estate, conveniently located next door, or bigger groups can go for the larger McGuigin Wines or Tyrell's Wines, both less than a 10-minute drive away.

Those who opt for a full-day delegate package don't have to miss out on tasting the Hunter Valley as the hotel can bring the cellar door experience onsite, most commonly for a pre-dinner tasting.

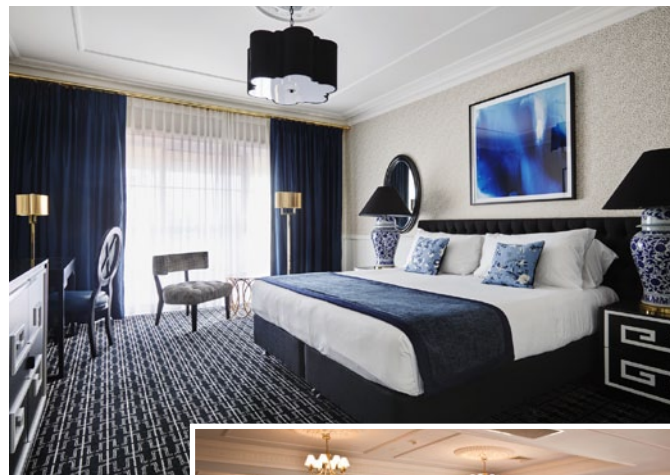
Swain said the hotel's event size "sweet spot" was a hotel buyout of between 70-140 people, but noted there were extra bedding options available which allowed the hotel to cater for up to 160 guests.

The hotel is fresh from a refurbishment last year and its largest space is The Hunter Rothbury Room, at 255m², which can be split into two rooms.

It is followed by the James Busby room (**inset**), which can comfortably seat up to 120 and offers a break-out space with its own courtyard and fountain.

The Kirkton also features smaller break-out rooms and private dining options, complete with delightful perks like the option for a bonfire.

The hotel also plays host to its resident pigs and chickens, which are tucked away a short walk from the pool, tennis court,



basketball court, gym and sauna.

The former Sebel property was snapped up by the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) last month (**BEN** 03 Jul) and the property has since been making the most of the Group's network.

Swain said the move opened up new avenues for business to come through and had put the hotel on the radar for PCOs considering other IHG properties in the region, demonstrated by "a lot of leads" which had come through since.

"We bring that country charm into a premium environment," he explained.

Whether it's the rural feel, gorgeous boutique design, or friendly staff, it comes as no surprise that many delegates are drawn back to this endearing manor for a repeat getaway.



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24th August 2017

AIR SUMMIT FOR SYD

WESTERN Sydney will host aviation and infrastructure experts from around the world at an Aerotropolis 2026 Summit next year as the city prepares for the development of its second international airport.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced the conference overnight at Seoul's Incheon Airport and said there was much to be learnt from the Korean gateway.

"Incheon is a powerful example of how to leverage the economic impact of an airport by creating an 'aerotropolis', or city around an airport, with thriving industrial and commercial presence," she said. The Aerotropolis event will

be jointly hosted by the NSW and Federal governments and will involve industries such as defence, aerospace, advanced manufacturing, freight and logistics, agribusiness, health, education and tourism.

It will be held in mid 2018 as part of the development process for Western Sydney Airport, which is due to open at Badgerys Creek in 2026.

"We want Western Sydney Airport to be about much more than just building an airport – we want it to be a fully integrated economic precinct that will deliver jobs and opportunities for the people of Western Sydney and across NSW," Berejiklian said.

Unconference opens in Melb

THE coworking revolution in workplaces worldwide will come under the microscope today in Melbourne as the city welcomes the three-day Global Coworking Unconference (GCU).

Inspired by the shared workplace movement, the event will focus on community in the workplace, including how to cultivate it, why it's important and how it's driving change globally.

The event is being hosted by Hub Australia at Hub Southern Cross in Bourke St, with speakers from the US, Canada, Australia and NZ.



AS EVENT theming goes, the concept is simple; the only tricky part might be doing the laundry afterwards.

About 3,000 people will dress entirely in white on 04 Nov when Brisbane hosts the secretive Le Diner en Blanc.

Inspired by similar events in Paris which have spread to cities around the world, the dinner attracts food, and fashion enthusiasts to a mystery location - **CLICK** for more details.



Gray's Say



Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular **Business Events News** feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.

The devil is in the detail

IT SEEMS, these days, that just about every Executive Secretary and Personal Assistant aspires to be an event manager, PCO or incentive expert. Indeed, there are some publications that actively promote this desire and encourage PAs (to use this as a generic term) to organise their companies' own events and get involved when an external professional event manager is appointed.

Far be it for me to blunt these aspirations - and I'm the first to admit that where the relationship between PA and a PCO/Incentive Practitioner is well delineated the synergy can work well - but event management is not an exercise in democracy. The client sets the parameters and the event manager sets out to meet those in the most cost effective and/or creative way possible. Once the details and the budget for the event - be it a conference, a banquet, an incentive program, an activity or an incentive travel reward - has been agreed the event manager takes control.

Within an event management company the hierarchy is well defined and everyone knows their niche within the organisational structure to bring an event to a successful conclusion. This doesn't always work when organising events with committees whose members think they can do what they want rather than what has been decided. And don't speak to me about point-scoring! A simple event can turn into a nightmare when everyone is determined to make their mark and disregard the

event manager, the run sheet and, frankly, common sense.

The run sheet exists to make sure everyone is aware of what should be happening at any one time; who should be doing what; what food or beverages should be served and when (and when not); what AV is required...the list really can be endless but it's all there.

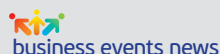
It's really not difficult to organise a straightforward conference but what most people and companies lack is time. And to suggest that a PA can simply absorb the organisation of an event into her (or his) already busy schedule means one of two things to me: they're either under-employed or under-paid.

I have worked with many clients' PAs and have always made a point at the first meeting to extend an invitation to help or offer advice for any other event in which they may be involved. It's a genuine offer and, more often than not, it has resulted in a good working relationship which has extended far beyond the duration of the initial event.

But what is worse than an meddling PA is a client (or more usually a senior executive) who clearly thinks their position means that airline regulations, hotel cancellation policies and conditions set by other suppliers do not apply to them.

A good PCO or Incentive Practitioner can save an organisation time and money and allow the people managing the company to do what they do best...and that's not being an event manager.

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