



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

MEA appoints new board

MEETINGS and Events Australia (MEA) held its Annual General Meeting last week to elect its board.

The Electoral Council Meeting, held at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre, elected Anne Jamieson to continue in the position of chairperson for the MEA.

Ian Whitworth will be vice chair and Susan Ryman-Kiernan will take on the role of MEA's treasurer.

Kate Smith and Alana Hay will be board members, with the latter also being nominated as secretary.

MEA ceo Robyn Johnson said the board would ensure that MEA continued to grow its position as the peak national industry body.

DUBAI: OPTIMISM FOR EVENTS

THE inaugural Dubai Association Conference wrapped up this week, with industry leaders expressing optimism about the future for associations both in the Middle East and worldwide.

Dubai Dept of Tourism and Commerce Marketing director general Helal Al Marri said he wanted to make Dubai a gateway for regional and international associations to establish themselves in the emirate and take advantage of opportunities in the area.

"As we continue to align associations, government and businesses together through the Dubai Association Centre, we plan for Dubai to become the top destination for associations regionally," he said.

Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry president & ceo Hamad Buamim said associations were among the biggest contributors of economic growth and business activity globally.

"Associations have valuable knowledge, expertise and skill sets that can enhance the



emirate's competitiveness and drive its knowledge economy."

The conference's two-day program focussed on building the association community, skills development for association executives and sharing best practices from around the world.

Delegates included int'l

association execs, government reps, and event professionals.

The event was hosted by the Dubai Association Centre and a joint initiative of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, plus Dubai World Trade Centre.

Luxperience EOI now open

EXPRESSIONS of interest to attend Luxperience as a global or national buyer are now open.

Organisers say senior decision makers specialising in unique luxury travel services, boutique incentives, personalised, or VIP travel management or private event designers are high in demand for the 2018 event.

The luxury MICE event will be held in Sydney next spring from 16 to 19 Sep.

Next year's gathering will be the first under new owners Diversified Communications Australia (**BEN** 05 Oct).

CLICK to register your interest.

Moreton Hire Air Con hire

MORETON Hire has introduced heating and air conditioning systems to their offerings across Australia.

The new heating and cooling systems have been sourced from ActronAir.

The range will be available for short- or long-term hire & can be rented individually or with a marquee designed to cater for the equipment.

Heating and cooling systems are now available to be booked.

Call 1300 360 424 for more.

Dreamtime hits Melbourne

THE Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) recently hosted 11 NZ MICE planners for a two-day program as part of Business Events Australia's Dreamtime event.

The Melbourne stream included a trip to the Mornington Peninsula, where the group enjoyed lunch at Montalto Vineyard (**pictured**) before stopping off at the Peninsula's hot springs.

Back in Melbourne, the Kiwi incentive agents stopped at Metropolis Events and White Lane, a Moroccan themed dining pop up space.





DNSW JOINS AACB

THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) has announced the NSW Govt's tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW, has joined the peak body for Australia's convention bureaux.

AACB ceo Andrew Hiebl said the body was pleased to welcome another Australian region to the AACB.

"Destination NSW has recognised the value that AACB provides as a trusted entity to large and small destinations alike, including

market intelligence insights and the opportunity to learn from a broader network of bureaux across the country," he said.

Hiebl said the move tied in with Destination NSW's regional conferencing plan, which was announced in Aug (*BEN* 07 Aug).

The \$6m NSW Regional Conferencing Strategy & Action Plan aims to drive more business events and visitors to rural and regional NSW.

The AACB advocates on the behalf of 1,700 industry operators and stakeholders.



ICC Sydney's chocolate elves have been hard at work ahead of Christmas, preparing handcrafted chocolate Christmas trees as corporate gifts.

The spectacular trees have been decorated with chocolate ornaments from stars to snow flakes.

In case you're wondering, the tree tasted delicious after we could bring ourselves to eat the creation.



Get Global early birds

GET Global is encouraging exhibitors who are considering attending the one-day MICE trade event to register as soon as possible, with early bird deals set to expire in two weeks.

Get Global directors and founders Gary Bender and Donna Kessler said there were several packages to choose from, all with early bird discounts.

"We also have a 'buy and save' offer, and encourage companies to book together and save."

Discounts on offer can save attendees up to \$860.

Get Global - Where the World Meets will be held at ICC Sydney on Fri 20 Jul.

Early bird specials will be available until Fri 29 Dec.

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*.

2017 - A Year in Conferencing

I CONFESS. I love end-of-year 'best-of' lists. Best albums, best movies, best books, best dual citizens who had to quit politics etc.

So here's my own "Best of 2017" entry, "Best Things I Experienced at Conferences in 2017".

In no particular order...

1. Throwable microphones:

Cube-shaped spongy microphones that you can throw around a conference room during Q & A sessions. I saw these at a few conferences this year. A great innovation which always created a buzz and a few laughs in the room. Google "catchbox" and give them a try.

2. Shorter conference presentations:

It has taken a while for the shorter, sharper TED-style presentation to catch on in conference world. But thankfully, companies have finally started accepting the fact that attention spans are shortening and it is simply too hard for most non-professional speakers to hold an audiences attention for longer than 20-30 minutes. Less is more.

3. Mango Conference in Bowen:

Cyclone Debbie ravaged the Qld town of Bowen back in March, just a few days before the Australian Mango Industry Association were scheduled to hold its large conference. The town banded together and a massive clean-up took place, involving not just all the tourism and event operators but what seemed like the whole town, including the conference venue. Community spirit in practise and an excellent conference took place which I was fortunate enough to take part in. Well done Bowen community. Well done Mango people.

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.



4. Fresh New(ish) Speakers:

As an MC, in 2017 I was again fortunate to meet, introduce and hear many brilliant conference speakers, way too many to mention here. A few relatively new-to-the-circuit speakers (well at least first time I'd seen them!!!) that everyone should hire and hear next year include Lucas and Nic from Orange Sky Laundry, Mentalist Anthony Laye, Matina Jewel, Steve Sammantino and Future Crunch.

5. Great Conference Locations:

I was fortunate enough this year to conference in some stunning and exciting locations as diverse as Queenstown (where there is no such thing as a bad view), Darwin (which is a simply wonderful and unique destination which always puts on a great conference), Fiji - where everyone smiles, sings and Bulas all day long, the amazing Laguna Beach California (the Montage Hotel was one of the most spectacular conference locations I have ever worked at), beautiful Cairns and Port Douglas, the awesome conference facilities at Adelaide Oval and my favourite conference location this year - the new ICC Sydney (simply because it's my hometown venue). A great Convention Centre for a great city.

So many more 'BESTS' - but so little time.

Have a relaxing break. See you all in 2018.

