



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has three pages of news.

MCEC appoints

MELBOURNE Convention & Exhibition Centre has appointed Celeste Johnston as director of information technology.

She was previously head of digital technology at AGL.



WE'VE all heard of the term "runaway bride"... well, now there's a new type of wedding belle making headlines around the world.

A group of Russian women donned elaborate bridal gowns in the World Cup host city of Kazan last week for a friendly soccer match intended to show their eternal love for the sport.

The women hiked up their skirts and split into teams of five to play the 15-minute halves, with one honest contestant stating, "We had a nice appearance but it wasn't very comfortable".

SYDNEY SCORES A MILLION

THE prestigious US-based Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) inaugural Global Conference is set to take place at Sydney's International Convention Centre (ICC) in Sep 2019, bringing with it more than 8,000 top-earning professionals from around the world.

Sydney's proximity and appeal to MDRT's rapidly growing membership helped the city secure the event, with the organisation's president James Pittman saying they were excited to be heading to the harbour city.

"MDRT truly appreciates what Sydney offers – great accessibility from all corners of the world, diverse and welcoming people, charming landmarks and exciting nightlife...we are looking forward to having a successful conference in this great



metropolitan city."

With MDRT's membership comprising of 500 companies in 72 countries, 98% of the delegates are expected to be international, with the event on track to generate more than \$19m for the local economy.

CEO of Business Events Sydney (BESydney) Lyn Lewis-Smith said Sydney was the ideal choice for the inaugural event.

"We have the unique

combination of business expertise, innovation, facilities and event management experience, and a glorious location on the world stage," she said, adding that it "provides an excellent opportunity to offer a first-hand experience of Sydney".

The Million Dollar Round Table was founded in 1927 and is billed as the "Premier Association of Financial Professionals".

Port Douglas website gives back

A NEW Business Events Port Douglas website offering visitors things to do and information on sustainability is now live.

The website lays out initiatives such as tree planting and beach clean ups, along with business events & incentive travel ideas.

Business Events Port Douglas chair Megan Bell said the new website was just what business events buyers wanted.

"2019 will see an increase in the diversity of the region's business events...the area will welcome Mexican, Portuguese, Spanish and Canadian incentives, while also continuing to see US incentives and domestic and New Zealand conferences."

Gauci to C2

ROB Gauci has been appointed to the role of managing director of the C2 Melbourne conference event.

Taking place 17-19 Oct, C2 Melbourne creates a "sensory journey space" with participants attending talks, workshops, performances and festivities; [CLICK HERE](#).

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Find out how MICE is performing across Asia in the July issue of *travelBulletin*.
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STAGING REBRANDS

STAGING Connections has officially changed its name to Encore Event Technologies, a move designed to unify the company's branding across all of its international operations.

The technology and production services provider rebranded its Chinese operations earlier in the year, with this week marking the completion of the brand realignment in the Australian, New Zealand and Fijian markets.

"As we expand throughout the Asia Pacific region... a single brand will enable us to truly function as one of the largest AV and event production networks



The Brisbane City Lord Mayor's Trust Gala Ball last year.

within the industry," said Encore Event Technologies managing director Tony Chamberlain.

The company says that day-to-day operations will not be affected by the rebrand and will only serve to enhance its existing product offering.

Honest food

THE Adelaide Convention Centre (ACC) has enlisted experts from health and medical institutions to help create its latest healthy menu options.

Under the banner of Honest Goodness, the new menu has been developed with the help of nutritional advisors from the South Australian Health & Medical Research Institute, the University of Adelaide and the CSIRO.

ACC executive chef Gavin Robertson said the menu was also distinctly South Australian and full of flavour, with an emphasis on house-made elements and whole, fresh ingredients.

CLICK HERE to view.



Get Global space sold

ORGANISERS for the outbound MICE trade event Get Global have announced floor space has sold out.

"We have over 140 exhibitors, an increase of 25% from 2017, and we are now in the position of having to turn other exhibitors away," said Get Global co-founder Donna Kessler.

Get Global will be held at the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC) 20 Jul.

Destination update

CRUISING South East Asia with Scenic Luxury Cruises and Tours is an incentive destination dream with its all-inclusive commitment.

All-inclusive meals, beverages, tipping and gratuities means no additional costs for your group.

Scenic's signature Enrich experiences will take your incentive group into the heart of South East Asia's culture, offering once-in-a-lifetime, hand-picked experiences and creating memories that will last long after the journey has ended.

All-inclusive, exclusive and unique, Scenic Enrich experiences take you behind the scenes to experience moments inaccessible to the ordinary traveller providing an authentic look at local life on the shores and surrounds of South East Asia's waterways.

Cruise and tour through Vietnam from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap, or add in extensions to the capital Hanoi, Hoi An and the stunning Halong Bay.

Bring a sense of wonder to your next incentive program.



Westin expanding to Adelaide

MARRIOTT International has announced plans to launch its Westin brand in Adelaide, revealing designs for a 285-room hotel in the city's General Post Office (GPO) building.

The hotel is part of a major redevelopment of the GPO by the Greaton Group and will include more than 310m² of meeting and event space, as well as a 24-hour business centre.

Due to open in 2022, it will involve a 15-storey tower alongside the GPO and will offer three dining options, gym facilities and a Heavenly Spa by Westin.

MEANWHILE, Adelaide has been chosen to host the 2024 World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering, an event expected to attract 2,500 delegates to the city.

The Adelaide Convention Bureau said the event would be one of the world's most important gatherings of medical physicists, biomedical engineers and specialists, and would contribute about \$17.6 million to the local economy.



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All-inclusive luxury on your next incentive group with Scenic's luxury Mekong cruise





EMPORIUM FOR BRIS

BRISBANE'S Emporium Hotel South Bank is on track to open its doors this Aug, offering a series of new meeting and event spaces that will be fully equipped with the latest technology.

The luxury boutique hotel will feature three state-of-the-art boardrooms with capacity for 12, 14 and 20 people, all with wireless presentation systems, video conferencing and the

latest in digital entertainment and audio-visual equipment.

In addition, the 410m² Frangipani Ballroom will boast a cocktail capacity of 400 and banquet capacity of 260, with the option to create smaller spaces within.

General manager Peter Savoff said the range of event spaces would "set a new benchmark in luxury for corporate hospitality in Brisbane".



WIN WITH HKTB

Recognised as one of the world's most exciting and vibrant cities, Hong Kong is a destination where you can take your corporate event to new heights. Whether it's a conference for hundreds or a meeting and incentive group, Hong Kong has it all.

Be in the draw to win a weekly prize, leading up to Get Global by answering the special Hong Kong weekly question:

To win be the first person to send the correct answer to the question to hktb@businesseventsnews.com.au

Bon Voyage! Victoria Harbour is home to floats of all sizes. Name a vessel that you can charter as part of The Vintage collection.

Visit Lisa and Jessica at Get Global to discuss why Hong Kong should be your venue of choice. See you 20 July at the International Convention Centre, Sydney.



EDITORIAL

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GENerating Change

Director of Conference Focus, Max Turpin is sharing his insights on a range of topics with a regular column in **BEN**. Topics include new generation events and making events effective and valuable.

Audience engagement – part 5

SO HOW do you measure engagement? Coming back to event tech suppliers, they claim that engagement can be measured by the number of tweets sent, the number of social conversations, the number of event images posted, the number of people replying to surveys or participating in polls. In response, I would say okay, fine, but all these things are quantitative, not qualitative. Just because someone sends a tweet or posts a picture, does that qualify them as an engaged, satisfied participant? To draw comparison, you may have had 100 people visit your website in the past week but if none of them actually did anything and took action – buy something or contact you – the numbers are irrelevant. They were merely browsers. And they left your website disengaged. What you really want is new clients.

I would argue that measuring engagement is a waste of time because the only thing that matters is action and outcomes. You could say that everyone was engaged at your event because they all wrote notes. Well, most people do. How many of you have written notes down at an event, taken them back to work and never looked at them again? I would guess everyone. Doing something with your notes and taking (new) action is the only thing that matters. If you don't do anything new after attending an event or apply anything you learned, you've pretty much wasted your time. And the host has wasted their money. Most attendees leave events smiling, take their notes

with them – destined to find their way to the bottom of a pile of unread reports or some other dark crevice – and later rate the event eight out of 10, giving the impression to the host and organisers that it was a great success. This happens all the time. You might say the behaviour is misleading, deceitful even. But for an attendee, a day out of the office meeting friends old and new, paid for by their company, is something to enjoy. We like days like that. So while the content wasn't engaging and I have no intention to use any of it, I had a good time. In fact, I wish there were more days like that. Here....have an eight out of 10.

A well-designed event survey can help uncover engagement levels and, more importantly, what people intend to do afterwards and how to apply what they learnt. In addition and better still is a post-event communication and follow-up strategy designed to find out what people are doing with what they learned and encouraging them to take action. But how many event owners or planners bother with that, let alone even consider it?

In summary, there's no doubt engagement at events is an important consideration. But I believe it's been over-hyped, while outcomes are overlooked. The value of anything, tangible or intangible, is measured by its benefits and usefulness. Engagement is important, outcomes are valuable.

Read previous installments in this series [here](#).

If you'd like to learn more about how to make your events fresh, innovative and effective, please contact **Max Turpin** at Conference Focus on 02 9700 7740 or email max@conferencefocus.com.au.

