



## MEA EVOLVE 2021

**MEETINGS & Events Australia** (MEA) has announced its annual conference, Evolve 2021, will be held on 01 Jul in Melbourne.

With the theme of 'Building Confidence Through Best Practice', Evolve 2021 will be supported by major partners Accor, EventsAIR and Melbourne Convention Bureau.

The theme for Evolve 2021 was developed from feedback taken from an industry survey conducted by MEA in Dec 2020, with attendees to recognise the importance of bringing about change and creating a new future for the industry.

Now in its 37th year, the one-day event will take place at Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, with almost 20 plenary and concurrent sessions, including a welcome networking function the evening prior.

There will also be satellite events at venues in Sydney and Brisbane, along with a virtual hub on the OnAir 3D platform.

The annual MEA Awards Dinner will conclude affairs, and recognise excellence and exceptional achievement in the sector through an extraordinarily challenging year.

MEA Chair Nigel Collin said the nonprofit organisation hopes to welcome more than 500 event professionals from across Australia.

"People are eager to get back

to what they do best, face-to-face events," Collin said.

"The industry is looking for leadership and support through recovery with relevant and timely information.

"Evolve is here to deliver that through its program."

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the city wants the world to know it is open for business, and the best place to host events.

"We are totally committed to bringing back the buzz to our city and supporting local jobs," she added.

Melbourne Convention Bureau Chief Executive Julia Swanson said if the MICE sector is serious about driving recovery of the sector, it needs to lead by example, and reconnect and re-engage in-person at business events, such as Evolve 2021.

MEA's core strategy for this year is to provide advocacy for the events sector, recovery tools, best practice and support employee retention through training and education.

It said it will work closely with the City of Melbourne and Melbourne Convention Bureau to ensure a fantastic event for all, with Evolve to provide an important platform to drive the recovery of the business events sector in Melbourne and Australia.

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## BCEC's big win

**THE** world's leading computer modelling experts are set to meet at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) for the Asia Pacific Congress on Computational Mechanics in 2025.

The team at BCEC collaborated with the Queensland University of Technology, supported by Brisbane Economic Development Agency and Tourism & Events Queensland to secure the event for Brisbane.

## AACB+Health

**THE** health sector will be key to the recovery of the business events industry, according to Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) Chief Executive Andrew Hiebl.

The AACB Chief expressed his view at STR Insider, an event held earlier this week.

Key insights from the AACB's Forward Calendar of Business Events report highlight that 'Health Care and Social Assistance' represent one in three events secured.

## Unconventional MCEC

**MELBOURNE** Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) is aiming to become "the home of the unconventional", as it focuses on transforming its marketing position.

MCEC's 2021-24 strategy will focus on continuing its leadership in a post-pandemic world with a clear focus on four key areas of priority: people, financial sustainability, community pride and new markets and products.

The new brand position will play a crucial role in showing the world why MCEC and the city of Melbourne is the place to conduct a business event.

MCEC Chief Executive Peter King said the refreshed brand is representative of the unconventional ways the Centre works - an evolution which began last year.

"We do things a little differently at MCEC and we are now looking to the future to ensure we keep innovating and evolving," he said.

"Our 2021-24 Business Strategy recognises that MCEC makes a significant contribution to the life and economy of our city and state, and we want to keep making an impact where it counts," he added.

**Today's issue of BEN**


*Business Events News* today has two pages of news.

## Events space?

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**P&O Cruises Australia** is taking virtual events to a new level by this week hosting a four-day cruise - all without leaving your desk.

Not quite the holiday **BEN** was dreaming of, but perhaps the next best thing, the inaugural virtual voyage is being conducted as a four-day trip from Sydney to Queensland's Moreton Island.

P&O's *Pacific Explorer* will be showcased in the online cruise hosted on the line's Facebook and Instagram platforms - and just like a real cruise there will be deck parties, trivia quizzes, and high teas along with an "entertainment package by high-energy and irrepressibly funny comedy juggler James Bustar" in the form of an action-packed video.

There will even be some Moreton Island 'shore tours' including a dolphin feeding session via Facebook.

Join in the jollification at [facebook.com/pocruses](https://facebook.com/pocruses).

## BEIA p'ship

**BUSINESS** Events Industry Aotearoa's (BEIA) long-standing technology partner EventsAIR will lend its support to MEETINGS 2021, its seventh year of supporting NZ's largest business events exhibition.

## Wine masterclass

**THE** National Wine Centre of Australia has introduced a new virtual wine tasting opportunity which can titillate the senses of up to 80 corporate participants.

Hosted by one of the Centre's experienced Sommelier team, the two hour sessions feature six wines decanted into special vials which are sent across the country for each attendee, who simply need to provide their own glasses.

The cost is \$95 per person including the session, wines, tasting notes, instructions and delivery to all participants.

Enquire with Olivia Bryant on [olivia.bryant@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:olivia.bryant@adelaide.edu.au).

## Becc is back

**ASM** Global has announced the return of Rebecca "Becc" Barry, who today becomes Director, People and Culture for ASM Global Asia-Pacific.

Barry's industry experience includes senior HR oversight at Stadium Australia, Sydney Showgrounds, Optus Stadium in Perth, ANZ Stadium and Bankwest Stadium in Sydney's west.

ASM Global CEO Harvey Lister said with the group seeing strong demand in venue management projects across the region "it is time to step up the support and leadership we provide in HR Management in our venues to ensure we have the best staff to deliver the high levels of customer service that we and our venues' owners are looking for".

# 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**.

## Bookshelf Envy

**I'VE SPENT** countless hours this past year-and-a-bit doing online conferencing and watching many speakers present virtually - as well as having Zoom / Teams meetings with clients and colleagues.

And it's occurred to me that the COVID online era has for the first time invited us into the homes, offices, home-offices and living rooms of the people with whom we work.

Along the way it's given us an insight into other people's lives and living circumstances, as we have met and viewed each other's families, flat-mates, pets, gardens, pot-plants, sofas, paintings...and especially bookshelves.

Full disclosure - when I'm involved in online conferences, I can't help looking behind and beyond the presenters and checking out their home environment and especially their bookshelves, because the 'bookshelf background' is often the scenery of choice for many online presenters.

And my main learning is this: other people's homes, offices and especially bookshelves are way cooler, more interesting, more scholarly and overall more appealing than mine. Yes, I have bookshelf envy.

Somehow everyone else seems to have a more organised, more cohesive, more geometrical and more colourful bookshelf than mine. And I've spent a long time since COVID making my own bookshelf look as cool

as possible!! But I'm still in awe of everyone else's. Many presenter's bookshelves look like they've come direct from an IKEA catalogue or that Marie Condo herself has come over and styled these rooms!

And I'm not talking about the fake virtual backgrounds, I'm talking real live home-offices and shelving units.

Don't even get me started on those people with colour-coded bookshelves!!!! OMG.

I do think the colour-coded bookshelf looks amazing, but I can't help thinking it must say something about the bookshelf owner and their personality.

But I'm no psychologist so I offer no comment...other than it looks great. And better than mine.

So what wisdom am I imparting in this article?

From an online presentation skills perspective, hats off to all those presenters with beautifully organised backgrounds.

A simple and neat background definitely looks more professional and less distracting from a viewer perspective.

But please don't go over the top - it's making many of us feel inadequate and having to manage our 2020-21 bookshelf envy. Maybe take one for the team and mess it up just a little.

You know who you are out there...

Andrew Klein is 'Virtually an MC' and runs webinars on 'How to Pitch & Present in an Online Environment'. [www.andrewklein.com.au](http://www.andrewklein.com.au)

