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Travel Daily AU

First with the news

Wed 11 Aug 10

Page 1

EDITORS: Bruce Piper and Guy Dundas
E-mail: info@traveldaily.com.au Ph: 1300 799 220

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

JTG profit hit by merger

JETSET Travelworld yesterday reported a 45% drop in net profit after tax (TD breaking news), with the \$8.7m result impacted by \$4.5m in costs related to its proposed merger with Stella, as well as a \$5.5m "amortisation of intangible assets".

JTG's total transaction value was down 7% to \$2.2 billion for the year, with net revenue also sliding 7% to \$135 million.

CEO Peter Collins said the second-half pre-tax profit was 59% higher than in the first six months of the year (before merger costs) with this improvement "largely driven by recovery in the leisure sector and strong cost control".

The figures also confirm the struggle of the corporate market, with the Qantas Business Travel segment reporting a \$3.6m loss, with total transaction volume down almost 27% to \$750m and external revenue declining more than 30% to \$32 million.

Compared to 2008/09, the JTG retail operations reported almost the same profit, down only slightly to \$17.5m, while the

Qantas Holidays wholesale division more than doubled its profit to \$17.1m for the year.

Collins said that the proposed merger with Stella Travel is the "principal short-term focus of the company," describing the deal's rationale as "compelling".

He said it would give JTG the ability to reduce its unit cost of distribution and "compete in an industry where online aggregators, online suppliers, competitor owned and controlled networks and new home-based competitors are developing at a rapid pace".

JTG didn't declare a dividend, in accordance with the details in the Explanatory Memorandum relating to the deal which stated that the dividend has been suspended in order to conserve cash to fund the merger.

Why we love travel

DUE to popular demand from attendees at last weekend's Travelscene American Express National Consultants Conference in Cairns, a speech given by Kim Hatherly of Southside World Travel in Sydney has been reproduced on page 8 of today's issue - to provide some inspiration on those tough days in the travel agency office.

Shaken, not stirred

TOURISM officials in Vanuatu say there was no significant damage resulting from an earthquake which occurred near the main island of Efate yesterday.

"Normal tourism operations have returned," said a statement from the Vanuatu Tourism Office, which confirmed that Port Vila's airport was temporarily closed as a precautionary measure to check for structural damage.

"Guests at the major resorts in Port Vila followed tsunami warning safety protocols and moved to higher ground; however they were able to return to their accommodation shortly after," said VTO gm Annie Niatu, adding that all public places are once again open today.

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10 GOOD REASONS TO VISIT NEW CALEDONIA

4 It's Great Value

The Australian dollar is at a high against the local currency

Aircalin
International Airline of New Caledonia

CLICK HERE FOR THE OTHER 9 REASONS

Cruiseagents deal with Moneydirect

SYDNEY-BASED Ecruising.travel has adopted Moneydirect as its first ever preferred payment solution, meaning that agents booking cruise product through its cruiseagents.travel wholesale operation can settle payments via Moneydirect.

The move means Ecruising is also using Moneydirect itself to settle transactions with cruise, accommodation and airline suppliers, with the company's chairman Brett Dudley saying using Moneydirect had introduced "valuable efficiencies" into the company's back office.



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Global Virgin points deal

TRAVELLERS on all Virgin-branded airlines around the world will now be able to earn and redeem points on the carrier's various loyalty programs, under a new pact announced in the US by Sir Richard Branson yesterday.

Branson was speaking at the National Business Travel convention in Houston, with the new reciprocal agreements applying to Virgin Atlantic's Flying Club, Virgin America's Elevate program and the Velocity scheme operated by Virgin Blue for DJ, V Australia and Pacific Blue flights.

The move extends the existing reciprocal arrangements between Virgin Blue and Virgin Atlantic, and also includes a new interline agreement between Virgin America and Virgin Atlantic for bookings and travel from Sep.

V Australia and Virgin America already have an interline deal offering seamless travel, as do Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Blue.

Points earning becomes effective immediately, along with redemptions on Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Blue/V Australia, while reciprocal redemptions for Virgin America will become available later this year.

"Virgin is known around the world for its legendary in-flight service, but now it is even more rewarding to fly with our global airlines," Branson said.

He also announced a promotion in which each Virgin airline is offering members who fly with at least two of the carriers between now and 31 Jan 2011 the chance to win a week's holiday on his private Necker Island.

Virgin Blue ceo John Borghetti said he hoped that the new agreements "will encourage more travellers from around the globe to enjoy a customer experience that is second to none".

The carriers said that miles or points earned on a partner airline would be posted to guests' accounts within 6 weeks of travel.

Moscow fire alert

THE US Department of State has warned American citizens about travel to Russia due to ongoing wildfires, which have also seen the departure of "non-critical mission personnel" from the US embassy in Moscow.

US citizens are being urged to postpone travel to the Russian Federation, where the fires have led to the declaration of a state of emergency in Moscow, Vladimir, Ryazan, Voronezh, Novgorod, Mordovia and Marii-El.

Australia's DFAT Smartraveller advice for Russia remains at the mid-range 'High degree of caution' alert level, also advising of the deterioration of air quality and state of emergency.

CPH profits up 19%

MACQUARIE Airports today reported that the pre-tax earnings for Copenhagen Airport for the six months to 30 Jun were up 18.9% to DKK864.4m (\$167m).

Traffic growth for the half year was 5.7%, and would have been about 10% had European air space not closed due to volcanic ash.



Window Seat

A GERMAN man has launched a new career in travel, becoming a tour guide for teddy bears.

Cologne-based Ulrike Bohmler says he's been overwhelmed with enquiries since launching his "Teddy-In" travel service, with clients paying him to take their soft toys on holiday to the UK and other destinations.

"It might sound crazy, but people love their soft toys and want to give them the best," he said, with clients sent photos of the teddies at various landmarks.

"I accompany the toys on their tour and although people might laugh at it, a lot of people genuinely love their teddy bears and want the best for them."

A PILLOW fight on board a Lufthansa flight from Tel Aviv to Frankfurt has become a YouTube sensation, after the playful in-flight battle was recorded on a mobile phone by a passenger.

The video shows a good-natured flight attendant tossing pillows at a group of French tourists, who then join the fun and start a 'pillow war' inside the cabin.

A number of commentators have pointed out that if this had occurred in US airspace the passengers and crew would have probably ended up under arrest.

The video is now online at www.youtube.com/traveldaily.

AND speaking of US security, an online blog on the website of the Transportation Security Administration has confirmed that on average two guns are discovered every day at US airport security checkpoints.

The blog says travellers usually claim they didn't know the gun was in the bag, with one blaming his wife who "must have left it in there when she was packing".

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Airline of the Year 2009
 TTTG Travel Awards 2009
QATAR AIRWAYS
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Travel Daily AU
 First with the news
 on location in
New York

Today's issue of *Travel Daily* is coming from New York, courtesy of Qantas Holidays.

IT'S highly recommended that first time visitors to New York purchase an All Loops Bus Pass to familiarise themselves with the city and location of its many well-known attractions.

This morning, Qantas Holidays Trip reward agents boarded the famous double decker bus, which offers 48 or 72-hour hop-on, hop-off access and includes the Downtown, Uptown and Brooklyn Loops, as well as a Night/Holiday Lights Tour.

Be sure to get off at the Rockefeller Center where you can join a guided tour by an expert historian who will identify significant buildings, gardens and spaces in New York's most famous landmark.

Then make your way up 70 floors for spectacular unobstructed 360° city views from the 'Top of the Rock' Observation Deck - and don't forget to have your picture taken so you can bring it home with you!

While on the Downtown Loop, disembark at the Empire State Building (ESB) and take a look around this national historic landmark before heading to the Observatory on the 86th floor where the fateful meeting took place between Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks in the movie, *Sleepless in Seattle*.

Or for a unique experience, take a trip on the NYSKYRIDE, the original and only virtual tour simulator located in the ESB.

During the 1.5 hour tour, you will view two pre-shows about New York and then "fly over" 30 famous city sites, without having to leave the second floor of the ESB.

TMS applauds CWT

TRAVEL recruitment firm TMS Asia-Pacific has lauded a move by Carlson Wagonlit Travel to provide its staff more flexible working arrangements (*TD*yesterday).

CEO Andrew Chan described the decision as a "breakthrough" for the travel and tourism industry.

"The part time/work from home element makes good business sense for a variety of reasons - from increased staff motivation, productivity and retention and improved customer service... and considerable reductions in overall operational costs," Chan said.

He said he believed the move will "act as a catalyst" for other travel organisations to follow Carlson Wagonlit Travel's lead and adopt similar policies.

TCF tough on fees

THE Travel Compensation Fund has cracked down on agents who have failed to pay their renewals on time, this morning announcing it was culling 13 agents, with effect from 10 Aug.

The agents ousted are: *Great Worthy Travel*, Mulgrave Vic; *Tweed Cruise & Travel*, Tweed Heads South NSW; *Wah Tung Travel*, North Perth WA; *Aust-Sino Connection*, Campsie NSW; *Han's China Tours*, Cook ACT; *Blue Ocean Tour*, Homebush NSW; *Penny Furseman Travel*, Kingscote SA; *Tea Horse Road Tours*, Viewbank Vic; *New Wonderland Travel*, Jolimont WA; *Perspolis Travel*, Yokine WA; *Down Under Adventures*, Anna Bay NSW; *Icon Travel Consultants*, Carine WA and *Skylight Travel Agency*, Fairfield NSW.

For ABN details see the Terminated Participants menu on the TCF's website - tcf.org.au.

Penny at the Palazzo



ABOVE: Travelscene American Express wasn't the only one conferencing last weekend.

Spencer Travel took its staff away to the luxurious Palazzo Versace on the Gold Coast, and pictured above are Tina Killeen, Penny Spencer and Louise Brown.

Club Med specials

CLUB Med has announced a new system offering "last minute hot deals" each Fri, for travel within the following four week period.

The specials will be loaded onto the Club Med website and are also available from travel agents.

The first deal offered is an all-inclusive Lindeman Island holiday from \$684 per adult for four nights, and \$374 for kids 4-11.

There are also specials for Aug travel at Club Med Cherating in Malaysia, as well as resorts in Bali and Phuket - clubmed.com.au.

TravelManagers up

TRAVELMANAGERS has announced the promotion of Michael Gazal to the newly created role of National Business Partnership Manager (BPM).

Gazal moves from his current position as NSW BPM, with the move part of a restructure which will also see gm Mandy Scotney take a more strategic focus for the group.

"We are definitely in a growth pattern at the moment and we want to allocate more of my time to the future of the company," Scotney said.

EVA cuts Brisbane

EVA Air is reducing frequencies on its flights between Taipei and Brisbane to six per week over the Northern Winter 2010 scheduling period, with the Mon departures not available for booking on GDS.

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Team Tramada run for fun



ABOVE: Agency support service Tramada had more than a dozen of its staff take part in Sunday's City to Surf fun run in Sydney.

Pictured here prior to pounding the pavement with 80,000 other participants, are Team Tramada, consisting of, back row *from left*: Madeleine Issa, Jordan van't Hof, David Campbell, Abhi Abhishek and Cristina Casey.

Middle: Chris Powell, Rachelle dela Cruz and Jo O'Brien.

Front: Peter Willis, Leith Mills, Gary Jensen, Tom Milne, Ozlem Tuncay and Daphne Siva.

NBTA name change

BUSINESS travel organisation, the National Business Travel Assoc. (NBTA) has said it will be altering its name to the Global Business Travel Association from next year.

SkyTeam looking at Asia Pacific partner

THE SkyTeam airline alliance has reiterated its eagerness to sign up further global partners, stating in its Aug update that one of three "priorities" for the rest of 2010, is to secure new members, including in the Asia Pacific region.

The alliance said its aims to "strengthen its network" in new locations including Latin America, India, Southeast Asia and the larger Asia Pacific.

"SkyTeam is actively looking to fill these gaps by talking to several potential partners," the network said this week.

Enriching the seamless experience and deepening cooperation between members are SkyTeam's other priorities.

VX to big ole Texas

CALIFORNIA-based airline Virgin America has announced overnight it will launch direct services from both San Francisco & Los Angeles to Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW), Texas from Dec this year.

VX will go head to head with oneworld carrier American Airlines (which is based at DFW), offering two direct daily services to the US West Coast, from 01 Dec (LAX) and 06 Dec (SFO).

Virgin founder Sir Richard Branson said VX would be "taking American on in their own backyard in Dallas, a city where on the LA and San Francisco routes American has 80-85% market share."

David Cush, VX president and ceo said: "Before today, travellers along these routes have very little choice and we think a little healthy competition is always a good thing."

Last month VX signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Airbus for as many as 60 A320 aircraft to cater for its expanding network from the US (TD 23 Jul).

DFW is Virgin America's twelfth destination.

Britannica launch

STENA Line has announced it will launch the second of its superferries, the 538-cabin *Stena Britannica*, in Oct this year.

Britannica will join the *Stena Hollandica*, with both ships sailing between Harwich and Hook in Holland, sailing in both directions.

Jamaica is cool mon

JAMAICA has lifted its State of Emergency which was declared earlier this year for some areas of Kingston (TD 25 May), following the extradition of an alleged drug leader.

DFAT is advising travellers to the region to be vigilant about safety "and comply with the instructions of security forces".

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QF hotel promise

QANTAS has extended its online 'Hotels Price Promise', which was initially introduced for a limited period (TD 22 Apr) but is now here to stay on a permanent basis.

Consumers who find a "lower comparable rate" after booking a hotel online at www.qantas.com will be given a voucher for the price difference to use towards their next hotel booking.

The QF online hotel push also offers members of the Qantas Frequent Flyer program a bonus 1000 points on top of standard points earned when booking partner hotels via the website.

Cook stay pay deals

PACIFIC Resort Rarotonga, Pacific Resort Aitutaki and Te Manava Luxury Villas & Spa in the Cook Islands have extended the sale period for its 'Stay 5, Pay 4' deal until the end of this month.

The offer is valid for travel through to 31 Mar 2011.



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Applicants should forward in confidence to the Human Resources Coordinator by email to maria.lopez@fly.virgin.com by close of business Thursday 19th August 2010.

Applicants not responded to within 2 weeks after the specified closing date, assumes that you have been unsuccessful in securing an interview.

AFTA UPDATE

the latest insights from AFTA's Chief Executive,
Jayson Westbury



I AM REALLY pleased to report that Australia was host this week to the World Travel Agents Association Alliance (WTAAA) board meeting and annual General Assembly. This is the first time that WTAAA has come to Australia.

Over two days the President, Chairman, or CEO of the following countries came together to discuss a range of important global issues which impact on the travel agent and more broadly the travel industry. Included were; Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, South Africa, United States of America and Europe with a special representation from Denmark.

WTAAA is made up of these countries which represents over 70% of the global BSP sales not to mention the scale of other travel products sold.

In addition to the global issues this body forms the front line in terms of the global travel agents representation with IATA. WTAAA hold 6 representative seats on the global council that meets twice a year with IATA and deals with the many issues that arise.

Furthermore, WTAAA are making important plans around how the travel industry and more importantly travel agents need to have a clear and united voice on many issues. Visa's, the changes to the distribution model and technologies, the changes to the work force and careers in travel, consumer protection measures, relevance and importance of the travel agents into the future and how each market around the globe are different. This body will go forward and have a real impact as the work plan and arrangements start to come together over the next 6 months.

WTAAA was formed only 5 years ago and as a global body it is increasingly difficult for action given the geographical distance, but now there is a planning phase in place and one which I hope will start to bring some action beyond the representation with IATA.

Mike Hatton was one of the founders of WTAAA and stepped down this week as the global chairman of WTAAA. He was awarded an honorary life membership of WTAAA which was extremely appropriate given the commitment and vision he has shown in the development of this body.

His successor is the entrepreneurial travel agent Peter Barlow from New Zealand who is the serving chairman of TAANZ and who continues to own and operate his own travel agency/TMC.

So the global body actually has a travel agent at the helm and I am sure this will be very pleasing to many within the industry. Peter will now take WTAAA into the next phase of its life and AFTA will continue to provide the support and input on the many and varied global issues.

On another matter; I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Chris Goddard and his team at Maxim's Travel who celebrated their 25th year in business last night in true travel industry style. Well done to everyone at Maxim's and I am sure they will go on to have another successful 25 years and beyond.



United sale fares

UNITED Airlines has released sale fares from Mel to LA priced from \$922 and ex Syd from \$941.

Other destinations inc SFO, LAS and NYC, on sale until 26 Aug and travel from 01 Oct-09 Dec - for details see unitedairlines.com.au.

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Your chance to be a TD roving reporter!

Travel Daily is giving subscribers a chance to become a *Travel Daily* roving reporter and travel trade blogger on location in Europe from September 28 to October 9 on the 'Switzerland Mega Famil'.

This amazing competition is being sponsored by Rail Europe, Switzerland Tourism and THAI, in support of Rail Plus, Rail Tickets, CIT Holidays and Infinity Rail.

Over the next 2 weeks impress the judges:

**In 100 words or less describe
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This description can be about anything you choose: a city, restaurant, hotel, resort, bar, monument - whatever you think makes an interesting story that your colleagues will love to read and even inspire them to visit your nominated 'place' too!

The chosen 'reporter/blogger' will be packed off with the specialised tools of the trade to capture the trip in full, including camera and will be expected to report back on what's happening every 2nd day to be captured in *Travel Daily*, on the TD insiders blog, THAI's eNews and dedicated agent website/Blog plus also Switzerland Tourism website/Blog.

The winner will be announced on September 6, so get those thinking caps on and email your entries together with your full name, position/title, travel agency and location to reporter@traveldaily.com.au

[Click here for competition terms & conditions](#)

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JAL offloads more

THE JAL Group is continuing to divest some of its businesses, with Japan Airlines International to sell a 90% stake in its JAL Sky Kansai division, while the JAL Ground Service Co. subsidiary will offload 90% of its JAL Ground Service & Support Kansai divisions.

This week JAL said it was selling 79.6% of its stake in JAL Hotels.

Crystal Taj package

CRYSTAL Cruise is offering its passengers a three night fully escorted pre-cruise land package to the Taj Mahal in India, priced from US\$599pp.

The package is valid on the 29 Mar 'Safaris and Seashells' voyage from Mumbai and the 19 day World Cruise, both of which start from Mumbai, India - crystalcruises.com.

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Best Western adds

BEST Western has added the 36 room Best Western Albany Motel and Apartments in Western Australia to its portfolio.

Room types include standard, deluxe, family units, self-catering apartments and a King Spa Suite.

Let's hear it for New York



THESE lucky travel agents on Qantas Holiday's Trip birthday reward famil to New York were treated to a welcome cocktail reception upon their arrival at Hotel Beacon last night.

Situated in the historic Upper West Side, Hotel Beacon features 130 luxurious rooms and 130 suites, which all underwent a full renovation last year.

Each of the rooms includes a fully-equipped kitchenette, a 32 inch flat screen TV, iPod docking clock radio, in-room safe and wireless internet access.

The hotel is conveniently located near the Lincoln Center, Museum of Natural History, Central Park, Theater District, shopping and restaurants.

"Hotel Beacon is a popular choice for Australian travellers because of its location, and we're going to be opening a cocktail lounge next year that will also

cater to our clientele", Hotel Beacon gm, Thomas J. Travers, told *TD* last night.

Pictured *above* enjoying the New York skyline, back row *from, left* are: Geraldine Traino, Hotel Beacon; Bada Payne, Jetset Morley; Stacey Daley, Andrew Jones Travel Hobart; Michelle Woodsford, HWT Epping; Karen McQuain, QH Contact Centre; Sarah Phillis, Platinum Escape; Sandra Taylor, Travelworld Goulburn; Sue Harrison, CTM Bundall; Lorraine McLoughlin, HWT Ashmore; Dayna Robertson, QH; Matt Paine, HWT Launceston; and *front row* are: Angie Howes, QH; Angela Kaluzyn, Travelscene South West; Sarah Gott, HWT Reservoir; Anita Wenn, HWT Marion; Sue Jones, NYC & Company and Thomas J. Travers, Hotel Beacon.

Lebanon advisory

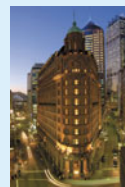
THE Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade is warning travellers heading to Lebanon that violent attacks are possible due to ongoing political and sectarian tensions.

Retaliatory attacks are also possible in all parts of Lebanon due to rocket attacks launched from the country recently, the government site advises.

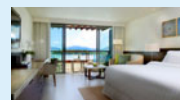
Accommodation Updates

WELCOME to *Accommodation Updates*, *Travel Daily's* Wednesday feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.

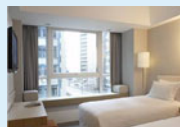
The RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL SYDNEY has unveiled a brand new Lobby and Bistro Fax Restaurant and Bar. The \$2.9million redesign including an update of the floors, walls, drapery and furniture. The centerpiece of the lobby is the new restaurant and bar which the hotel hopes will be Sydney's new hotspot, featuring modern Australian cuisine with European influences.



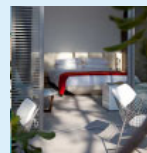
The WESTIN SIRAY BAY RESORT & SPA Phuket has opened its doors this month. The 261 guest rooms, suites and villas are decorated with a modern feel, and all rooms overlook the ocean with open outdoor balconies. The new Westin resort features six restaurants and bars, a ballroom and four meeting/function rooms.



SHANGRI-LA HOTELS & RESORTS has opened its debuted Traders branded property in Hong Kong - TRADERS HOTEL, HONG KONG. The 280 guestroom and suite property was renovated in 2008 and offers views of Victoria Harbour and the Peak. The hotel features a cafe, Traders Lounge, a lobby bar and a rooftop outdoor pool with gym.



DESIGN HOTELS has opened a new hotel is Cote d'Azur in France called the HOTEL SEZZ SAINT-TROPEZ offering a 37 room resort. All guestrooms have direct access to the terrace, garden and pool offering light and airy indoor and outdoor areas that merge together. See designhotels.com.



NZ air policy update

THE New Zealand government is reported to be analysing its current air transport policy to review possible threats Middle Eastern carriers may have on traffic aboard the nation's flag carrier, Air New Zealand.

It's the first time in 12 years that the NZ govt has updated its international air policy, however restrictions on further growth by UAE-based airlines is unlikely.

Disney saves 18

THE *Disney Magic* cruise vessel saved 18 Algerian sailors who were reported lost at sea last week in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Disney ship joined in on the search while sailing from Gibraltar to Barcelona, when they came upon the stranded crew, whose vessel was reported to have lost power for up to five days.

Disney Magic provided food and cabins for the rescued Algerians.

CO 787 scheduling

CONTINENTAL Airlines this week said it is on track to take delivery of the first of 25 Boeing 787 *Dreamliner* aircraft by the third quarter of 2011, in time for the launch of flights from Houston to Auckland (*TD* 27 May) and Lagos (*TD* 15 Jun) in Nov next year.

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Only successful applicants will be contacted.

'YOU DESERVE TAHITI'... TELL US WHY AND WIN



To celebrate 'You Deserve Tahiti' month, throughout August, *Travel Daily* is giving travel consultant readers the chance to win an incredible seven-night holiday to Tahiti for two people, courtesy of Tahiti Travel Connection.

This fantastic prize includes:

- Return economy airfares on Air Tahiti Nui for two
- Two nights twin share accommodation at Manava Suite Resort Tahiti in a Standard Room (one pre and one post Manihi Island)
- Five nights' accommodation at Manihi Pearl Beach Resort in a Beach Bungalow
- Return economy flights for two from Tahiti to Manihi Island
- All land transfers on Tahiti and Manihi

For your chance to win this incredible holiday...

Tell us in 50 words or less why you deserve to win a seven-night sensational escape to one of the most beautiful places on the planet – Tahiti

Feel free to support your case with 1 image only. Entries must be accompanied by the agent's full name, agency name, phone contact and email contact.

Email your entries to: tahiticomp@traveldaily.com.au

Note: Only one entry per agent/consultant.

Click here for competition terms & conditions



Delta bonus miles

DELTA Air Lines is offering up to 15,000 bonus miles on its Sydney to Los Angeles route when flying BusinessElite from now until 30 Sep, if registered by 15 Sep.

Register at delta.com/skymiles.

Red Sea 20% drop

TEMPO Holidays is offering up to 20% off its six-day Kings and Pharaohs Cruise journey on the Red Sea, for departures between 19 Dec and 24 Mar, priced from \$1,407ppts - tempoholidays.com.

are you a battery hen or a free-range chicken?

Tired of working on a production line laying standard size eggs?

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WTAAA chiefs
gather in SYD

THIS week the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) met in Sydney, with its annual General Assembly electing a new board and office bearers.

The meeting saw former AFTA ceo Mike Hatton step down from his founding Chairman role, with attendees unanimously awarding him life membership in recognition of his service to the association.

Peter Barlow, president of the Travel Agents Association of New Zealand (TAANZ), was elected as Hatton's replacement.

"I am delighted to hand over the reigns to Peter as this Association is now well positioned to meet the challenges that this dynamic industry presents," Hatton said, adding: "This also ends a very personal journey for me as the Founder of WTAAA".

The two-day meeting discussed a range of issues including the "onward relevance of the travel agency community," the resilience of agents in the face of the global

financial crisis, new technologies for travel distribution and the importance of strong relationships in the supplier network.

The agency members of WTAAA participant organisations account for almost 70% of global airline sales processed via BSP and ARC, with the group aiming to provide a single global voice for agents.

Pictured above at Sydney's Sheraton on the Park are, back row *from left*: Jayson Westbury, AFTA; John Pittman, American Society of Travel Agents; Michel de Blust, European Travel Agents and Tour Operators Associations; Paul Yeo, TAANZ; Lars Thykier, Danish Travel Agents & Tour Operators Association.

Middle row: Ajay Prakash, Travel Agents Federation of India; David McCaig, Association of Canadian Travel Agents.

Front row: Peter Barlow, TAANZ; Mike Hatton; and Robyn Christie, Association of South African Travel Agents.



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You will need excellent communication & analytical skills, a professional, positive & friendly manner, have travel industry/GDS booking experience (pref Galileo), exhibit a stable work history and be dedicated to providing service excellence. You will work with the industry's most advanced technology in a fast growing, exciting company with excellent opportunity for advancement.

Email your Resume to humanresources@mptravel.com.au

Why we love travel!

LAST weekend at the Travelscene American Express National Consultants conference, Kim Hatherly of Southside World Travel in Sydney gave the following inspirational speech on the conference theme of "I Love Travel". Due to popular demand the abridged speech has been reproduced here, to provide some inspiration on those tough days in the office.



*"I've been looking on the internet..."
Isn't that opening line from a client
guaranteed to make you turn cartwheels
in joy and happy expectation of what
lies ahead of you with this file?
It's almost as heart-warming as
hearing "We are currently experiencing
higher than usual call volumes. Your call
is important to us and you have been
placed in a queue..."*

Of course, I'm certain to lapse into paroxysms of rapture and delight when I've put a file to bed, all payments made, just waiting on docs, and in comes the email from the tour operator, sincerely assuring me that my client's tour has been withdrawn only after long, hard, careful and painful consideration of the client's potential enjoyment and well-being, and no doubt countless sleepless nights and buckets of tears on the operator's part. But there's an alternative! The tour goes three weeks later and not to the same destinations and it starts and finishes in different cities to the ones I ticketed six months ago on the earlybird airfare!

Then there are the firms who congratulate themselves on being environmentally aware and green by dispensing with those nasty old paper documents - instead I get 40 triple-spaced pages in my in-box and use half a ream of my paper to print them out for them!

Is it any wonder there are times we can lose sight of what we love about this job and why we bother to stay in it?

Because a consultant worth their salt knows dozens of products. And destinations. And operators. And we know our clients. We know which product best suits each client. We know how to efficiently and economically move those clients from destination to destination, in the air, on the ground, by sea; we know where to stay, what to see, where to eat, what to do, at what time of year to do it, what it costs and why it's interesting.

Not one website or booking engine or res agent has the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience, or the capacity or opportunity to share it with the consumer, like the travel consultant does. We are in a unique position to aid, advise and influence the traveller's decisions on a destination, mode of travel and choice of product.

And that's why we do it. For the traveller. For the client. Because we love getting out there and exploring the world, because travelling is something we couldn't live without, because itchy feet is a condition we were born with and plagues us our whole lives. And because we want to share our experiences with our clients, we can't help infecting them with our enthusiasm for the discoveries they're about to go out and make for themselves.

We know the destination's best-kept secrets, which style and mix of touring best suits the client's needs and preferences, and we know the perfect ship with the right length of stay in the correct ports.

We whet their appetite for what's ahead. We watch the first timer's sense of nervousness or lack of confidence melt away as we arm them with advice and take care of all the little details to smooth their way.

Call me old-fashioned, but this is what we consultants have, what we consultants do, that the internet doesn't. A faceless, anonymous website doesn't know our client the way we do.

We get to know our new clients, find out why they're travelling and help them weave their interests, hobbies and passions into their travels, help make each client's travel experience unique to them.

We know that one size doesn't fit all. We know every client is different, and even if the 20-something mates, the family with young children, the new retirees, or the well-heeled older couple all want to go to LA, we know each needs a different, individually-tailored "LA experience" - and that's what we give them.

Note to the marketing department - I don't work in a store. That term originated with another chain and just personally, I hate seeing the term 'store' creep insidiously through the rest of the industry. My clients don't come into a 'store' and pluck a generic item off the shelf, with me as checkout chick at the end of the production line. I am a consultant in a Travelscene agency, and I create personally-tailored arrangements for each client. I'm not interested in knocking a dollar off an airfare to secure a sale. I'm interested in working with my clients to create the right travel experience for them.

A good slab of our job is done for us by our head office. Our preferred suppliers have already road-tested the hotels, the tours, the local ground operators, to give us the confidence to recommend and book them for our clients. I may have been on a famil and inspected a range of hotels, but the wholesaler's product people inspect them all, include the best, and drop the ones that don't come up to scratch.

The rest is up to us. Is it easy to get bogged down in the office grind? Of course it is. Is it easy to despair at the clients' seeming faith in Trip Advisor or their friends' opinions over their trust in our own knowledge and advice? Is it easy to criticise the airlines, or diminishing commissions, or operators' direct marketing to clients, or insurance companies telling a national TV audience that agents rip them off? Absolutely.

But if we are to distinguish ourselves from our competition as flesh and blood consultants, to prove our worth and our value and our relevance to the client, we need to continue giving the travelling public what they will get nowhere else. It is our personal love of travelling, our inside-out knowledge of destinations and products, our expertise at unique itinerary design, our ability to communicate our knowledge and our passion, and our commitment to our clients' best possible travel experience, that will justify our existence.

If the time ever came when I no longer got a kick out of looking out a plane window and seeing the panorama of a new city break through the clouds, if I no longer got a buzz out of sharing that excitement and anticipation with a client planning their trip, if I don't love where I've been and what I've seen, and don't care whether they'll love it too, I'll pack this in.

Fortunately, I do still love it, despite the impossible phone queues and the cancelled tours and the increasing list of online check-ins and document printouts and tour personalisers and all the additional stuff the operators flickpass to me to do - because in the end, I do still love exploring that great big world out there, and I do still love watching clients discover it too!





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Business is BOOMING! Corporate travel is all about managing relationships with dedicated clients, using your amazing travel and airfares knowledge and providing the highest level of customer service. Now is your chance to break into the highly lucrative corporate travel market and make the BIG \$\$\$ you deserve. We currently have 3 CBD and 2 North Sydney clients who are happy to train retail consultants into corporate. Don't hesitate – make the switch to corporate NOW!!!

ROCKING TO THE RETAIL BEAT!

RETAIL TRAVEL CONSULTANTS NEEDED

NORTH SYDNEY – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$55K +

Looking for a brand new start? We currently have a range of retail opportunities available for talented retail consultants. If you have a passion for leisure travel, excellent CRS skills, plus international airfares knowledge and love nothing better than to inspire future travellers with your own travel tales, then this role is for you. Work in a small, close knit team with a fantastic salary and bonus structure plus amazing travel benefits. Put your skill to the test and see how far you can go.

MAKE YOUR MOVE!

DOMESTIC CORPORATE CONSULTANT

MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$44K

If you are an experienced domestic corporate consultant, do yourself a favour and join this lovely boutique office based in Melbourne's trendy inner south east. Opportunity will not knock twice, so now is the time to make a positive change in your life. You will love the friendly team, funky office, team incentives and Monday to Friday work hours. Strong domestic fares knowledge and CRS skills are required.

THE PERFECT FIT

WHOLESALE TRAVEL CONSULTANT

MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE \$50K

What does your perfect role entail? If it is a challenging, specialised role you are after in a successful, vibrant office then this role will fit you like a glove! We are on the hunt for an experienced travel consultant with a passion for all things Africa. Working for this outstanding company, you will be able to utilise your strong sales ability and first class customer service skills to create amazing itineraries. Apply now!

NO MORE WEEKEND WORK!

CORPORATE LEISURE TRAVEL CONSULTANT

MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$55K

Attention all senior travel consultants! Get your work/life balance back on track and say goodbye to weekend work! We currently have a number of exciting opportunities available within Melbourne's finest agencies that not only offer Monday to Friday hours, but also excellent salary packages and prospects for career advancement. With vacancies in the CBD, inner and eastern suburbs, there is sure to be a role for you!

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

WHOLESALE TRAVEL CONSULTANT

PERTH (CITY) - SALARY PACKAGE TO \$43K + Overtime

Move behind the scenes and join this well known travel wholesaler where you have the opportunity to be part of this great social atmosphere. With a reputation of service focused staff, you will need to show your ability to shine in areas such as customer service, phone manner and destination knowledge. A minimum of 6 mths experience required. With a start date of 30th AUG you will need to move quick.

MISSING THAT WORK LIFE BALANCE?

INTERNATIONAL & DOMESTIC CONSULTANT

BRISBANE NORTH SUBURBS: SALARY PACKAGE TO \$45K

Do your friends and family forget what you look like? Finding yourself missing those special occasions because you're at work? Take a full time role where you CAN have that work life balance! Join this fun and dynamic agency and work within a fun and supportive team. Great families on offer! You will have minimum twelve months as an international consultant with strong CRS skills. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity to join a leading agency in the area! Call today!

EUROPE & CRUISE SPECIALIST NEEDED!

HIGH END INTERNATIONAL LEISURE CONSULTANT

BRISBANE INNER SUBURBS – PACKAGE TO \$52K

Europe one day, SilverSea the next! Love a bit of variety in your day? We have an exciting opportunity for a senior agent to join this vastly experienced team. Work closely with your peers and enjoy booking high end clientele with their international travel. You will have minimum three years experience, strong cruise and European travel. This is a specialist role working in one of Brisbane's prestigious agencies. Call today!