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Virgin capital restructure

VIRGIN Australia Group plans to raise equity of approximately \$852 million through a proposed fully underwritten one-for-one non-renounceable pro-rate entitlement offer to shareholders at a price of A\$0.21 per share, the airline announced this morning.

The move is the outcome of VAH's capital structure review flagged earlier this year.

Investors Singapore Airlines, HNA Innovation, Virgin Group, Nanshan Group and Air New Zealand have made binding commitments to take up their pro-rata entitlements.

The proposed offer, along with the previously announced flagged placement of HNA Innovation (TD 31 May) will raise total gross proceeds of \$1.01 million in new

equity capital for the Group.

Virgin Australia Group ceo John Borghetti said the renewed capital restructure "will strengthen our balance sheet, provide additional liquidity and help fund initiatives to improve earnings & cash flow".

Under the program, Virgin Aus will reduce its ATR fleet and remove Embraer E190s altogether over the next three years.

VAH also confirmed the proposed placement of HNA and the offer will be undertaken, following receipt of regulatory approvals from China.

Ovation countdown

ROYAL Caribbean is celebrating the six month countdown until *Ovation of the Seas* graces local shores, with the megaliners due to arrive in Sydney on 15 Dec.

The behemoth ship sails in a brand new category of her own dubbed "supercruising", says Royal Caribbean Aus/NZ md Adam Armstrong, "because there is no other holiday destination (let alone any other cruise) quite like her in this part of the world".

See the **cover wrap** for details.

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Four Points back in Syd

JUST days after confirming its 16-year management deal of Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Darling Harbour will expire in late Nov, Starwood Hotels & Resorts has unveiled the brand will return to the NSW capital in two years.

Starwood has inked a deal with Frasers Property and Sekisui House Australia to reintroduce the brand at a new \$2b mixed-used development at Chippendale.

Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Central Park - one-time flagged as a possible Capri by Fraser Residence site (**TD** 24 Aug) - will be located at the former Old Kent Brewery site, near Central Station.

As revealed exclusively by **Travel Daily** last week, the hotel will feature 297-rooms (**TD** Thu) when it opens, slated for 2018.

The property will offer nearly 550m² of function space, a fitness centre, lounge and adjoining

pub, to be operated by acclaimed celebrity chef Matt Moran and his business partner Bruce Solomon.

Starwood Pacific director of acquisitions and development Andrew Taylor said the hotelier was "delighted" to partner with Frasers & Sekisui "to expand the presence of the Four Points brand in Australia".

Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Central Park joins 17 other Starwood hotels in the Pacific.



China investor for QF?

ANALYSTS are predicting airlines in China may be keen to take a stake in Qantas, following the investment by HNA and Nanshan Group in Virgin Australia.

Credit Suisse analyst Paul Butler believes China Southern or China Eastern would be likely to inject capital into Qantas as they both have established codeshare arrangements between China and Australia, *The Australian* reports.

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Shanghai Disneyland

SHANGHAI Disney Resort will open to the public tomorrow after five years of construction.

A three-day opening ceremony is now underway, including the premiere of the first production of *The Lion King* in Mandarin.

The US\$5.5 billion resort encompasses a theme park, two themed hotels and shopping complex and is built to host up to 100,000 visitors each day.

IMAX assessment

NSW Planning & Environment Dept has released its assessment report for the redevelopment of the IMAX building in Darling Harbour, Sydney which paves the way for another new 25-storey hotel in the city (**TD** 28 Jan).

The authority said the proposal will strengthen the role of Darling Harbour as a tourist attraction, complementing the revamp of the surrounding SICEEP.

"The Department considers the proposed hotel and serviced apartment uses are compatible with the existing and desired character of the Darling Harbour tourist & entertainment precinct," the NSW Govt added.

Alice agent charged

FORMER Travelworld Alice Springs owner/agent Saffron Josie Russell has pleaded guilty to the charge of obtaining benefit by deception, *NT News* reports.

Russell was yesterday charged with defrauding the NT's pension travel concession scheme to the tune of \$22,000 over a four year period, prosecutor David Morders told the court.

The agency, which was a former Travelworld franchisee of the year, submitted over 100 invoices to the Department of Health that were inflated above the actual cost of the govt-subsidised tickets purchased for clients.

She was condemned to a three-month suspended sentence and ordered by Judge Michael Carey to pay \$22,505 in penalties.

EK A380s to Moscow

EMIRATES is set to relaunch Airbus A380 services to the home of the Kremlin, with the double-decker jet to be utilised on flights EK131/132 between Dubai and Moscow Domodedovo (DME), effective 01 Dec.

EK last operated the A380 to Moscow in Jan.

JQ appoints new cmo

JETSTAR has confirmed the appointment of Qantas Group's Phil Wade as chief marketing officer, effective 01 Jul.

Wade joined the QF Group last year to head up Qantas & Jetstar's hotel platform, Hooroo.

His appointment follows current marketing chief Liz McCarthy's move to lead the Jetstar Group's customer care & shared services functions across Asia Pacific.

"Phil has a really strong pedigree in marketing and e-commerce and under his leadership we'll re-double our focus on data and digital," Jetstar Group commercial officer Catriona Larritt said.

5-day Greek air strikes

GREECE'S civil aviation workers union OSYPA has called a five-day strike for next week that is likely to disrupt international and domestic airports across the country, between 20-25 Jun.

OSYPA is protesting the long-term lease of 14 regional airports.

Greece Med Travel advises if there is a flight or ferry schedule change, cancellation or strike it will assist clients locally.



Window Seat

THE Chinese boy who stowed away to Dubai on an Emirates flight from Shanghai with hopes to strike it rich by begging has returned home without charge.

Gulf Business is reporting the 16-year-old allegedly snuck into the Airbus A380's cargo hold at Shanghai Airport.

The boy decided to make the nine-hour journey to Dubai on 27 May after hearing an online rumour that beggars can make over AU\$103,000 a month in the emirate.

He reportedly told a Chinese translator for Dubai prosecutors that he jumped over a fence and climbed into the cargo hold while the security guard was looking away.

The teen complimented Emirates' cargo compartment, commenting it "was very comfortable", although he did not eat anything during the lengthy flight.

He was caught when the A380 landed and was arrested.

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Easy with Club Med

CLUB Med has launched new Easy Arrivals service in a bid to streamline the process of getting guests get on the ski slopes.

The technology invites travellers to fill in their weight, height, skill level, preferred skis and number of skiers in their group online, allowing Club Med staff to prepare the gear in advance and cut out waiting time.

To find out more about the service, see clubmed.com.au.

QR Aus cargo play

QATAR Airways wants to become a "major player" in the international cargo market, with operations to Australia signalled as one of three new regions it will focus its attention.

"In 2017, we will target areas such as Transpacific, Australia and South America - do not be surprised if you see us becoming a strong player in all these markets in the next nine months," QR chief officer cargo, Ulrich Ogiermann said this week.

Solomon arrivals up

SOLOMON Islands visitor arrivals continue to build with strong Q1 statistics revealing a 14.5% year-on-year spike in the Jan to Mar period, according to stats from the Island's govt.

Australian visitors continued to dominate in Q1 with 2,024 international arrivals, a 15.6% increase on the 1,750 passing through last year.

A total of 5,037 international visitors arrived between Jan to Mar 2016 compared to 4,399 the year prior.

Quest on SiteMinder

SITEMINDER has secured a group-wide deal to provide distribution and direct booking technology solutions for Quest Apartment Hotels.

Quest's ceo Zed Sanjana said the group identified SiteMinder as having "great synergy and product capability for the needs of the 150-property strong organisation spanning Australia, New Zealand and Fiji".



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Queen's b'day honour list

AUSTRALIANS who have made a significant contribution to the tourism industry were among those recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list released over the weekend.

Founding director of North Star Cruises Australia, Craig Howson was awarded a coveted Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to tourism in WA.

Howson first offered adventure-cruises along Western Australia's Kimberley coast in 1987 and, in 2017 North Star will celebrate 30 years of successful operations.

"It is very humbling to receive this recognition and makes me realise how fortunate I was to pioneer adventure-cruising in the Kimberley," he said.

Leon Fink was also honoured for his significant service to the tourism and hospitality industry by being appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia.

The owner of renowned Australian restaurants including Quay is known for his city developments.

Fink also co-established the Tourism Taskforce with then Federal Tourism Minister John Brown in the 1980s.

Other influential figures recognised include Sevenhill Cellars winemaker Brother John

May who was made a Member of the Order of Australia for dedicating his life to producing wine and promoting tourism in the Clare Valley.

May received his first gold medal for wine in 1975 and produces sacramental wine for the Catholic Church.

Further to this, Peter Hurley of South Australia was recognised with an Order of Australia Award for his services to both tourism and hospitality while George Lloyd also secured one for his eminent service to the aviation industry, particularly to the advancement of air safety.

Queensland property veteran Noel Christmas was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his work in property development sectors and his ongoing commitment to tourism on the Gold Coast.

Mark Stone of Geelong became a Member for the Order of Australia for his significant service to the environment and tourism sectors including serving on tourism boards while Griffith University hospitality professor Leo Jago has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his dedication to education and tourism.

See the full list [HERE](#).



Position: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Reporting to: National Sales Manager
Location base: Sydney
Contract: Full time, Salary + Bonus

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Position Overview

An exciting opportunity exists for someone to join our growing NSW trade sales team.

As business development manager you are accountable for driving Topdeck sales through all agency partners in the assigned region. You will be working to achieve sales targets and maximize growth on all products within Topdeck. Developing strategic relationships with trade partners is key to the role, as is ongoing training, support and communication. If you are self-motivated, have a passion for sales and are highly organised, this could be the role for you.

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Wednesday 15th June 2016

Domestic tourism uptick

NATIONAL domestic tourism is on the rise, with strong growth observed across both holiday and business travel during the year ending Mar 2016, according to the latest National Visitor Survey released by Tourism Research Australia (TRA).

A record number of Australians took a domestic holiday in the year ending Mar, with 36.1 million overnight trips recorded (up 9%), injecting \$28.4 billion into the economy - an increase of 4% on the previous corresponding year.

Overnight expenditure also grew 5% to \$58.3 billion on the prior corresponding period, with the number of overnight trips climbing by 8% to 88.5 million.

In terms of business-related domestic travel, an 11% uptick to 18.5 million was achieved, with business nights growing 9% to 68.2 million.

"With the industry on track to reach its Tourism 2020 targets, I am confident that tourism will play a major role in securing our nation's prosperity and economic security for the 21st century," commented Senator Richard Colbeck, Minister for Tourism and International Education.

New Tas walking trips

LIFE'S An Adventure has released three new guided walking tours exploring Tasmania.

New additions include itineraries traversing Flinders Island, Cradle Mountain and Walls of Jerusalem, and the South West Wilderness Walk.

All inclusive three-day packages start from \$1,249 per person for tours booked and paid in full by 31 Jul.

THAI BKK-MEL change

THAI Airways has revised its planned Airbus A350-900XWB debut on the Bangkok-Melbourne route, according to GDS displays.

Previously scheduled for 01 Aug, the new A350 launch date has been moved to 15 Sep.

The airline will continue to operate Boeing 777-200ER to MEL in Aug and Sep.

The Stanley PNG

NEXT month will see a new five-star hotel and serviced apartment complex, The Stanley Hotel & Suites, introduced to Papua New Guinea's Port Moresby.

The 433-room property will be located close to Parliament House, all Government offices and most of the Foreign Embassies or Consulates and will adjoin the only large shopping centre in the capital.

Facilities include executive floors and lounge, Presidential and Royal Suites, restaurants, a 3,000m² outdoor area, resort pool deck and a day spa.

For images, see **TD's** Facebook.

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TravelManagers' conferencing



AROUND 273 personal travel managers from TravelManagers gathered for the bi-annual state meetings held across Australia.

"Our first state meeting was held in March 2009 with 90 personal travel managers in attendance and supported by two national partnership office representatives...we are

extremely proud that seven years later we have tripled the number of personal travel managers attending," said Michael Gazal, exec gm, TravelManagers.

South Australian PTMs and their national partnership office representatives are **pictured** above at a recent state meeting held in Adelaide.

SINGAPORE AIRLINES



SALES EXECUTIVE - Sydney Sales Office

Singapore Airlines, one of the world's most respected travel brands, currently has the following opportunity for a highly motivated individual to join the Sydney sales team.

Sales Executive (Permanent Full-time Position)

Reporting to the Agency Sales Manager NSW, the successful candidate will be responsible for,

- Developing and implementing sales strategies to achieve revenue targets
- Sourcing new business opportunities and converting leads into sales
- Developing and managing relationships with key trade partners
- Maintaining an accurate and ongoing sales pipeline
- Completing reports on market activities
- Representing the Company at seminars, conferences, product launches, trade and public expos

The successful candidate will need to demonstrate the following:

- Current sales experience with sound airline / industry knowledge
- Results driven and strong commercial acumen
- A business development background within the airline / travel industry will be an advantage.
- Proactive with excellent communication skills and professional deportment
- Strong organisation, planning and time management skills.
- Proficient PC skills
- Australian citizenship or Permanent Residency status.
- A current driver's license and own car

This position attracts a package including free and concessional travel and subsidised medical benefits.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit their application by 5pm Wednesday, 29 June 2016 to Michael Kirkby, Agency Sales Manager via email to: amanda_hui@singaporeair.com.sg or by post to: Locked Bag A3008, Sydney South NSW 1235.

Only suitable candidates will be accorded an interview. All applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Wednesday 15th June 2016

MSC Cruises 96hr sale

SAVINGS of up to 50% on MSC Cruises' 2016-2017 sailings will become available for 96 hours from midnight on 28 Jun.

The sale is valid for select itineraries departing from Sep to Mar next year.

Included is a seven-night cruise departing from Genoa to Naples, Messina, Valletta, Palma de Mallorca, Barcelona and Marseille from \$452 per person.

BNE funding boost

THE Queensland government has allocated \$33.5 million over four years to help grow Asian tourism and to secure more int'l air routes to the state.

Tourism and Major Events Minister Kate Jones said the package would aim to attract tourists by creating innovative tourism products; building stronger relationships with targeted Asian cities; growing the digital capability of Queensland tourism businesses to secure more Asian business and increase awareness of Queensland experiences.

French air strike over

AIR France's pilot strike action which ran over the past few days has now concluded.

The airline says it plans to operate its entire flight schedule today, with 100% of its long-haul flights, 99% of its domestic flights and 97% of its medium-haul flights set to resume.

Over the four-day strike, 1,030 flights were cancelled and 127,500 passengers were affected.

Yesterday, Air France issued a statement saying it plans to operate 77% of its flights: 86% of long-haul flights on dep from Paris, 78% of domestic flights and 73% of medium-haul flights to and from Paris-CDG.

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CUSTOMERS travelling on select South America trips with Explore! will receive an extra nights' hotel accommodation and a complimentary local experience, if booking by 24 Jun.

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Agents hop around Sth America



THIS group spent 11 days last month scoping out Santiago, Easter Island & Patagonia, courtesy of South America Tourism Office.

Staying at the Luciano K, Explora Rapa Nui and Explora Patagonia, highlights of the trip include the Moai statues, Rano Kao Crater in Easter Island and horse riding in Patagonia.

Pictured are: Jackie Warren, Freeway Travel; Melinda Gregor, Gregor & Lewis Bespoke Travel; Jonathan Chaparro-Zarate, South America Tourism Office; Nicholas Aquilina, LATAM; Isobel King, Travel Writer; Andy Webber, Discovery Travel Centre; Sarah Tierney, Trans World Travel; Janet Massie, Where2Travel; Cathy Schroder, Southlands Travel & Cruise; Adrienne Witteman, Trendsetter Travel and Mark Pearman, Epping Travel.

VA to halt SYD-AUH

FLIGHTS operated by Virgin Australia between Sydney and Abu Dhabi from 07 Apr-30 Aug and 02-19 Nov will be suspended due to the ongoing scheduled fleet refurbishment of its wide-body Boeing 777 fleet.

Existing codeshare flights will continue to be operated by Etihad Airways during the periods and passengers booked on VA-operated services will be re-accommodated on the Gulf carrier's flights.

Virgin Australia has issued code SWF16501212AUH for the earlier flight and BW000003 for the Nov flights to waive additional fare, taxes and change fees for guests directly affected by the cancellations who need to change their plans.

Serko Administrator

As the Spencer Travel Group continues to grow, a brand new opportunity exists to join the corporate team by supporting our online booking tool, Serko.

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Applications close COB 28 June, 2016 and apologies, anyone not replied to within 30 days has been unsuccessful.



AOT honours its top achieving STARS



THE AOT Group recently hosted STARS the Event - rewarding its top 75 agents from Sunlover Holidays and Territory Discoveries with an amazing four nights in the Top End of the Northern Territory. The prestigious annual event remains one of the longest running and most sought after rewards on the travel industry calendar and brings together the AOT Group's high achieving agents from across Australia.

STARS the Event 2016 was a resounding success, with attendees visiting key Top End regions including Darwin, Kakadu, Litchfield and Katherine. From the tropical Welcome Function at Mindil Markets to wildlife encounters with crocodiles in Kakadu, STARS 2016 was an event to remember.

The event finished on a high with the STARS Gala Award Evening held at Skycity Darwin, hosted by Tourism Northern Territory.

"A big thank you to our supplier partners and sponsors, including Tourism NT, for an amazing event and helping us showcase the beauty of the Top End. And a sincere thank you to our retail partners for their ongoing support," General Manager Wholesale Lisa Harrison said.

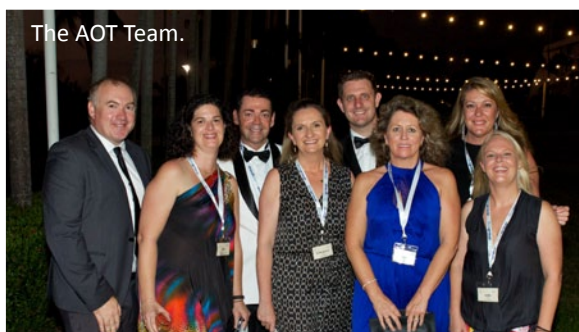
LEFT: Megastars in Katherine.



Buffalo Team.

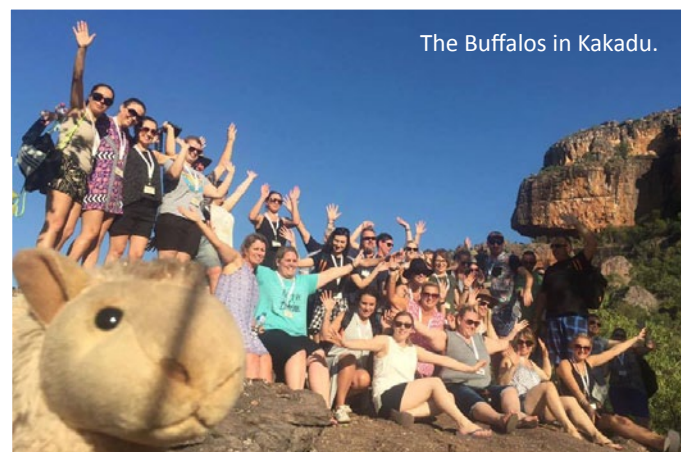


ABOVE: Crocodile Team.



The AOT Team.

BELOW: The AOT Group's Mega Stars.



The Buffalos in Kakadu.



Jabiru team.

Starwood off-loads

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts has closed on the sale of the St Regis Florence and the Westin Excelsior Florence to Nozul Hotels & Resorts, the owner of The Gritti Palace, Venice and W Doha Hotel for €190 million.

"Asset dispositions remain a key part of that strategy... we have already disposed of nearly \$500 million of assets this year," commented Thomas Mangas, chief executive officer of Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

The properties will continue to operate under the St Regis and Westin brand flags under new long term management deals.

Top spots to dive

BOOKING.COM has compiled a list of the world's top diving spots in celebration of the Aussie release of *Finding Dory*.

The list includes dive experiences in: Heron Island, Queensland; Tulamben in Indonesia; Semporna, Sabah, Malaysia; Bunaken, Sulawesi Utara, Indonesia and Avatoru in French Polynesia.

Langkawi fast ferry

MALAYSIA'S new high speed ferry will welcome its first passengers on board from Jul next year.

The double-decker ferry service, operated by Sani Ferry Sdn Bhd, will initially take two high-speed watercraft between Kuala Kedah terminal and Lang Kawi.

Each vessel has a seating capacity for 450 pax including 30 Business seats in the upper deck.

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- 2 Nights Hotel accommodation in Frankfurt, a City Tour, and 2 Day Frankfurt Public Transport Card

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Reporting to: Global General Manager

Role Overview

The Country Manager will have responsibility for leading the Back-Roads brand within the Australia and New Zealand markets with a focus on delivering strong growth in sales from a direct and trade audience.

Outstanding commercial acumen, sound people skills and a passion for hitting targets and developing a business our Country Manager will be a senior member of the Back-Roads leadership team contributing to the global business strategy as well as leading the regional team.

You'll own our approach in the Australian and New Zealand markets encompassing sales, marketing and customer service and working closely with the Head of Global Marketing, leading and managing BDM's nationally and maintain strong trade partnerships at a senior level.

FOR FULL INFORMATION OR TO APPLY FOR THE ROLE, PLEASE CONTACT / SEND CV AND COVER LETTER TO:
elyse.childs@backroadstouring.com.au

Please note: Applicants must be available for interviews the week commencing 4th July 2016.

Finns Canggu opens

FINNS Beach Club Canggu in Bali has opened.

Situated on Berawa Beach, just 15 minutes away from Seminyak, the beachfront club offers a guaranteed ocean view.

Day beds are available (with a minimum spend) from 0900 to 1700, with full beach club facilities such as change rooms, wi-fi, towel and umbrella included in the cost.

Visit finnsbeachclub.com for more information.

VX launch LAX/OGG

VIRGIN America yesterday launched its nonstop daily flights from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to Kahului Airport (OGG) in Hawaii.

To celebrate the debut, VX are offering a special deal on fares starting at \$199 one way.

CLICK HERE for more info.

Lux Platinum partner

THE Star Sydney has been announced as Luxperience's Platinum partner for this year's event taking place on 18-21 Sep.

"The partnership presents The Star with the opportunity to showcase our property and the range of luxury experiences we have on offer as Sydney's premier events and entertainment destination," said John Autelitano, general mgr of hotels, The Star.

The Star will host Luxperience's Thought Leaders Forum and Welcome Party on 18 Sep.

Chrome River in Aus

CHROME River has launched an Asia-Pacific arm based in Sydney where it will provide dedicated support and implementation services to existing customers across the region.

The firm previously established a UK presence in 2014.

Travel Daily is Australia's leading travel industry publication. Produced each weekday since 1994, the newsletter is first with the latest industry news and is available by paid subscription to people within the travel industry - sign up at www.traveldaily.com.au.

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We have multiple amazing Inbound vacancies! From North Sydney to Central CBD enjoy creating bespoke packages throughout Australasia for the discerning overseas traveller. From zip-lining in the Daintree Forest to exploring Waitomo Glowworm Caves, design itineraries to showcase your homeland. You need inbound exp, passion for Australasia, pref Tourplan & a 2nd European language to not only secure one of these amazing roles but also receive top base salary, M-F only, ongoing product training & amazing 5* famils.

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Here's a unique travel opportunity in Brisbane where you can show off your strong rail product knowledge and make the move into wholesale travel. Working within this leading travel team you'll be responsible for booking domestic and international rail products whilst handling phone and email enquiries from travel consultants. This will be the start of a long and successful wholesale career and see you make superb \$\$ and enjoy five star famils and top travel discounts. These roles are interviewing now so call us today.

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CRUISE RESERVATIONS CONSULTANT
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My client is looking for a cruising expert to join their incredibly successful team in servicing the general public and agents with all cruising enquiries and make the most of the current cruising hype! You will have cruising famils and will only work one in every 5th or 6th Saturday! Get those weekends back and no face to face consulting! Min. 2 years travel consulting experience req'd. If you are cruising specialist who wants to take advantage of the cruising BOOM in Australia, contact us for more details!

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ONLINE CUSTOMER SERVICE CONSULTANT
MELBOURNE – SALARY PKG TO \$56K + BENEFITS

Our client, a well-known online travel giant is looking for their next customer service superstar. You must have a min. 18 months experience in a Travel Consulting role and strong native GDS (Galileo) knowledge. You will be utilising your extensive travel industry knowledge to service phone and email enquiry for new bookings, amendments and general travel advice. Located in the city fringe you will enjoy a rotating roster, fun and supportive team environment, fantastic break room and top company benefits.

I LOVE IT WHEN WE'RE CRUISING TOGETHER
CRUISE TRAVEL CONSULTANTS
BRISBANE – TOP SALARY PACKAGE

Experienced cruise travel consultants wanted! Come and work for a successful travel company where you will sell what you love! As a cruise consultant you will handle all types of enquiries and be booking cruises all over the world. Enjoy the option of working in this modern office or from home. You'll earn a top salary package and enjoy superb travel discounts. Previous experience as a cruise travel consultant is a must along with outstanding sales and customer service skills. Apply now!



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