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Tuesday 15th November 2016



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## Roberts departs SYD

SYDNEY Airport has promoted chief financial officer, Hugh Wehby as chief operating officer, replacing Shelley Roberts who has resigned after a five year term to take up an external ceo role. Wehby takes over from Jan.

## CT buys Executive Edge

TRAVEL management companies CT Connections and Executive Edge Travel have announced a merger, with the combined group comprising more than 110 staff in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

Executive Edge will come under the CT Connections umbrella, with director Gary Reichenberg saying it will become one of Australia's largest independently owned travel companies.

Both are members of the CT Partners consortium, with the group also incorporating CT Connections' MICE-focused Totem Group division.

Reichenberg said the three brands offered "best in class" service, with the combination giving the group the ability to "leverage off each other on all facets of travel.

"Bigger buying power over the

combined brands will deliver enhanced value and service for clients," he said.

Executive Edge's operations will be enhanced by the leading edge technology at CT Connections, he said, with access to thousands more corporate clients stepping up their leisure travel needs.

"For CT connections we're thrilled to team with such a highly reputable, trusted and respected leisure travel management specialist to cater for our corporate clients," he said.

The move also gives CT Connections access to a range of Executive Edge's partnerships including Virtuoso, Four Seasons, Mandarin Oriental and Peninsula.

## FJ boosting NAN/SFO

FIJI Airways is boosting capacity on Nadi-San Francisco flights next year, expanding the route from an eight-week period (in 2016) to a five-month long season (01 Jun-26 Oct) in 2017, including a third weekly frequency, GDSs show.



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## New SQ A350 routes

SINGAPORE Airlines will operate its new A350-900XWB aircraft on selected flights from Singapore to Tokyo Haneda and Moscow, effective from mid-Dec according to GDS displays.

### Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos, plus full pages from: **(click)**

- inPlace Recruitment
- Travel Trade Recruitment

## Phocuswright event

THE annual Phocuswright travel industry conference kicks off this morning in Los Angeles, with about 2,000 of the global industry's leaders gathering to discuss trends and issues in the rapidly changing marketplace.

Presenters will include Dara Khosrowshahi from Expedia, Booking.com ceo Gillian Tans & Stephen Kaufer from TripAdvisor.

Also on the stage this week will be Flight Centre chief strategy officer John Morhous, while a host of travel technology aspirants will showcase their wares to delegates - many of them investors - in the annual Phocuswright innovation summit.



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## OTA duopoly 'detrimental'

THE Accommodation Association of Australia (AAoA) has blasted an "administrative arrangement" the competition watchdog has negotiated with OTA juggernauts Expedia & Booking.com, warning the move threatens to hand the bulk of accommodation sales in this market offshore.

In a letter to ACCC boss Rod Sims, AAoA chief executive officer Richard Munro flagged "major concerns" with a recent decision.

"To say members of the Association are angry with the outcome of the investigation is an understatement," Munro said.

He claimed Booking.com and Expedia, both of which are owned offshore, currently controlled 80% of the Australian market.

"The ACCC is seemingly unaware that the overwhelming majority of accommodation bookings in Australia in 2016 are made via the internet and that very few bookings are made directly with accommodation businesses and/or through 'walk-ups'," Munro remarked.

"The ACCC ruling will be detrimental for competition in

Australia's OTA market, which is a virtual duopoly."

"Why do two giant overseas-based OTAs which employ very few staff in Australia and pay very little, if any, taxes in Australia need protecting ahead of small businesses in regional and rural Australia, as many of our members are?"

Munro slammed the Australian Competition & Consumer Comm's "inconsistent approach".

In his letter, obtained by *Travel Daily*, Munro highlighted the OTA situation was "strikingly similar" to the aviation sector, specifically relating to High Court action the competition regulator has taken against Flight Centre about pressuring airlines to offer it their lowest fares.

"Yet the ACCC is taking a vastly different approach."

Munro insisted the matter be re-examined by the ACCC, and indicated the organisation would advocate for a Senate inquiry into the lack of competition in the online travel agent space in Australia.

To view his letter, [CLICK HERE](#).



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## New Air Tickets website

HELLOWORLD'S Air Tickets has debuted a new fully responsive website ([airtickets.com.au](http://airtickets.com.au)), with a range of extra features on top of all its existing functionality.

Designed to operate across desktop, mobile and tablet devices, the portal includes fare prices displayed inclusive of indicative taxes, so customers can be quoted the approximate price.

Air Tickets gm Russell Carstensen said the site was the "only ticket consolidating product in Australia offering a 'shopping' function while viewing fares".

The system connects SmartFares

with the GDS to provide the real-time shopping data for a given fare, while the NYOP (Name Your Own Price) technology also now features in SmartFares.

"The new site is a reinforcement of our continuing investment in future infrastructure for the benefit of the agents," Carstensen said, adding the redesign aims to drive greater efficiencies to benefit consultant work practices and reduce overall workloads.

"It's all about being best-in-market and giving our agents access to air tickets quickly, correctly and at the right price," he added.

The site will be the subject of training WebEx sessions for all agents, along with regular Fare Tracker EDMs as well as help desk and phone assistance.

Carstensen said the new site had already been deployed across Australia and will roll out in New Zealand in the coming months.

## Travel expo revamp

THE Travel Industry Exhibition has announced a revamped format for 2017, introducing a two-day seminar program and a new VIP buyer scheme.

Event director David Paterson said the changes were prompted from the feedback of past attendees and were aimed at creating a more targeted event, with a higher calibre of buyer and greater networking opportunities.

He said a speaker program was being developed to provide industry insight and address current issues, with details to be announced in the new year.

The show would also introduce a qualifying process for buyers and exhibitors, with about 400 "hand selected" senior figures invited to join a VIP buyer program and a more refined selection of exhibitors offered.

The expo will be held in Jul at Luna Park Sydney and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.



## Window Seat

CATHAY Pacific captain Hank Cheng has successfully completed an epic round-the-world journey on board his home built plane.

The achievement has made local aviation history with Cheng circumnavigating 50,000km in a single-engine RV-8 light aircraft (Cheng is pictured in the plane).

A group of Cathay Pacific employees monitored the flight's progress throughout his three-month voyage and he was given a very warm welcome by crowds in Hong Kong when he touched down on the weekend.



## Skywards WSJ tie-up

EMIRATES' frequent flyer program Skywards has signed the *Wall Street Journal* as its latest partner, allowing members to redeem miles for an annual subscription to the US business news service.



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## Travel Daily

on location at  
**Universal Studios**

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Universal Studios Hollywood in LA, where we are experiencing the latest offerings including The Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

**UNIVERSAL** Studios Hollywood is a must-visit for Australians in Los Angeles, with the popular attraction taken to the next level about six months ago with the debut of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

It's the second major Harry Potter attraction for Universal, which launched the concept at its Orlando park some years ago.

Harry Potter World features the village of Hogsmeade, with guests able to tour Hogwarts castle as well as enjoy a range of thrilling rides - the perfect complement to an LA holiday.

## Air NZ top airline

**AIR** New Zealand has been awarded Airline of the Year by global safety and product rating website AirlineRatings.com.

The New Zealand carrier was honoured for its record-breaking financial performance, award winning in-flight innovations, safety, environmental leadership and motivation of staff.

"These factors have stamped the airline as an industry trendsetter," AirlineRatings said.

Qantas Airways came in second, up from fourth place last year, thanks to flying kangaroo's "stunning financial turnaround" in 2016 and customer approval ratings sitting at all time high as it continued to innovate with lie-flat beds on all its A330s.

Singapore Airlines slotted in third followed by Cathay Pacific Airways, Virgin Australia/Virgin Atlantic, British Airways, Etihad Airways, All Nippon Airways, Eva Air and Lufthansa.



What's the value of celebrity endorsement? Find out in the November issue of *travelBulletin*.

**CLICK HERE** to read **travelBulletin**

## New Mantra cfo

**MANTRA** Group has appointed Stephen Hobson as chief financial officer, replacing acting cfo Kevan Funnell who has fulfilled the position since Aug.

Hobson has more than 20 years' senior financial management, commercial and operational experience, primarily within travel, tourism and hospitality sectors.

From 2000 to 2011 when with the InterContinental Hotels Group, Hobson was responsible for implementing IHG's global business transformation strategy.

He was more recently cfo and transformation executive at Carlson Wagonlit Travel, Australia and has also held senior roles at TAL Life, Qantas and Lend Lease Corporation.

CEO Bob East said Hobson's "technical skills, experience and expertise... are well suited to Mantra Group and I am certain Stephen will make a significant contribution to the group".

## VN plots US routes

**VIETNAM** Airlines is making a play at the North America market, applying to US regulators for numerous new routes between Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi to points in the US and Canada.

According to papers lodged overnight with the Department of Transportation, VN wants to begin flying to Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Seattle, Dallas/Fort Worth, via Taipei, Osaka and Nagoya.

Routes to Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto are also proposed.

VN said it planned to commence non-stop services from SGN to LAX from 30 Oct, utilising new three-class Airbus A350-900s.

Vientam's national carrier has also listed 25 points in the US it "may serve on a codeshare basis".

The move comes ahead of VN expecting to be approved to achieve IASA Category 1 status by the Federal Aviation Administration in early 2017.



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# Fly365.com rich content

**NEW** Australian online travel agency Fly365.com has become the first retailer in the Asia-Pacific region to adopt Travelport's Rich Content and Branding product, giving it access to branded fares and ancillary products from more than 180 airlines.

The website's owner and coo Scott Mayne said his company was now the only OTA in Australia able to offer flexible fare options with greater choice and a more transparent view of inclusions in each fare category.

"We're trying to make the whole website more transparent so people know exactly what they're getting and what they've paid for," Mayne said.

"We've found with the Rich Content and Branding that people are clicking through to a more flexible or higher fare type, which shows they really do understand what they're purchasing."

Travelport senior director OTA Asia-Pacific Ming Foong said Rich Content and Branding provided

greater detail than traditional GDSs, allowing the display of airlines' own branded fares and additional ancillary products like seat selections and upgrades.

"Most GDSs at the moment serve Economy class as Economy class, but different airlines might offer Economy flex, Economy plus or their own brand of Economy," Foong said.

The Travelport product allowed such fares to be shown in detail, displaying in a similar form to an airline's own website, he said.

## QF inflight wi-fi closer

**QANTAS'** new "world-leading" inflight wi-fi is nudging closer to becoming reality, after the airline confirmed today it had installed hardware on the trial aircraft.

Fitted last week, the Boeing 737-800 jet (registration VH-XZB) has re-entered commercial service and will operate for a few months without the wi-fi tech activated.

Technology partner, ViaSat will complete a range of ground and in-flight tests of the service over coming weeks before QF rolls out the wi-fi to pax in early 2017.

Once operational, QF's tech - on Boeing 737-800s and Airbus A330s - will be up to 10x faster than conventional on-board wi-fi.

## Hawaii Tourism push

**HAWAII** Tourism Oceania has launched a new consumer campaign, documenting influencers such as bloggers and photographers as they interact with Hawaiian locals.

Country manager Kerri Anderson said the promotion aimed to change perceptions among Australians who "think they know Hawaii".

"We wanted to show that Hawaii is much more than sand, sun, surf and shopping by using locals to show Aussies around some of their favourite and less expected places."

The campaign appears online.

## Penguin experience

**SEA LIFE** Sydney Aquarium has opened its new Penguin Expedition in which visitors get up close with king and gentoo penguins aboard small boats.

The exhibit, included with admission, has been inspired by the sub-Antarctic environment of Macquarie Island and is kept to a penguin-friendly temperature of six degrees celsius.



Visitors will learn about the impact of plastic pollution affecting penguins, as well as penguin breeding programs and conservation projects.

To view a video, **CLICK HERE**.



**HAWAIIAN** Airlines staff will don new uniforms (pictured) from late next year, coinciding with the launch of the carrier's first Airbus A321neo long-haul aircraft.

The airline this week unveiled the new look at a "runway to runway" show as part of Honolulu Fashion Week.

Created by Hawaiian designer Sig Zane in collaboration with Affinity Apparel and a committee of 40 front-line staff, the uniforms will be worn by more than 5,000

front-line employees including airport customer service teams, cabin service, cargo, in-flight, line service, maintenance, ramp and supply workers.

As part of the airline's tradition of christening its aircraft with culturally significant names, Hawaiian's new A321neos will be named after indigenous plants and forests.

The carrier has ordered 16 of the single-aisle A321neos, fitted in two classes with 190 seats.

## Hidden Queenstown

**QUEENSTOWN'S** former Evergreen Lodge has rebranded as Hidden Lodge under its new ownership, appointing a new lodge manager and refining its five-star operations.

Purchased in Apr by Jessica Brunell and Murray Boyes, the property offers views of Hidden Island on Lake Wakatipu from its position at Sunshine Bay.

## MSC World Cruise

**MSC** Cruises has opened sales for its first world cruise, departing in 2019 aboard *MSC Magnifica*.

The 118-night circumnavigation will start from Genoa, Italy, on 05 Jan and visit 49 destinations in 32 countries, sailing westward.

MSC Cruises Voyages Club members can book now, with general sales opening mid Dec and prices from A\$18,999ppts.

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# Kings Brolga double whammy



**AAT Kings** enjoyed a double win at this year's Brolga Northern Territory Tourism Awards held over the weekend in Darwin.

The annual awards ceremony is a chance to recognise those contributing to the Northern Territory tourism industry.

The AAT Kings team, took out the Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services category for their Uluru barbecue dinner and the Major Tour & Transport Operators division in recognition of the company as a major contributor to tourism through a touring and transport services.

**Pictured** above from left are smiling AAT Kings winners: John Gornall, top end manager; Jody Grossfeldt, head of guest experiences; Ben Farrington, driver guide with Matthew Hayden, award presenter and ex Australian cricketer.

## QR pinged US\$185K

**QATAR** Airways has been fined US\$185,000 by the US Department of Transportation for flying over forbidden airspace.

In late 2014 and early 2015, certain QR flights carrying the American Airlines code flew over foreign regions which had a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight prohibition in effect.

The US government is now taking action because codeshares with AA must comply to FAA rules and regulations.

## Texas roadshow

**TEXAS** Tourism will hold a two city roadshow in Melbourne and Sydney next month to share insights on 'The Lone Star State' with agents and wholesalers.

Representatives from Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth, Fredericksburg and Houston will be attending, with quiz-themed events planned to keep attendees entertained and in the running to win a trip for two to Texas.

Events will be held from 6pm at Sheraton Melbourne Hotel on 06 Dec and the Australian Museum on 07 Dec - to register, email [publicity@gtitourism.com.au](mailto:publicity@gtitourism.com.au).

## Star Syd appointment

**DINO** Mezzatesta has been appointed to the newly created role of chief operating officer of hotels, food, & beverage and retail at The Star Sydney.

The position will see Mezzatesta responsible for overseeing the strategic vision for the property's entertainment and leisure assets.

## 5% off Choice Hotels

**CHOICE** Hotels Asia-Pacific is offering its Privileges Members 5% off the best available room rate when booking on the company's website directly.

The hotel group said the offer now guaranteed loyal members the "best available price on the market".

## QFFF/ingogo app

**TAXI** booking app ingogo has partnered with Qantas Frequent Flyer allowing members to earn one Qantas point per dollar spent on taxis booked through the app.

Users can lock in their taxi ride up to 48hrs in advance, allowing them to skip airport queues.

## DNSW/Alitrip p'ship

**DESTINATION** NSW and online Chinese travel platform Alitrip have forged a new alliance to attract more visitors from China to Sydney and regional NSW.

Owned by Alibaba, Alitrip is one of the largest travel websites in China with more than 200 million registered users.

Destination NSW chief executive officer Sandra Chipchase said the agreement was built upon Destination NSW's already strong relationship with Alitrip.

"Alitrip is an important strategic partner for Destination NSW and is a perfect platform to reach the growing Free Independent Traveller and youth markets in China," Ms Chipchase said.

Alitrip said they it was "delighted" to formalise the "wide-ranging agreement" with the NSW agency.

## Airbnb/AirPlus pact

**AIRBNB** and AirPlus have joined forces to create an integrated booking and payment solution to assist business travellers.

The solution allows business travellers to book through Airbnb and have the charge automatically billed to the corporate account.

"The development of a direct payment from the AirPlus Company Account will enable full integration and will give travel managers and finance teams even more control and visibility over the bookings with full enhanced data," AirPlus country manager David Newington said.

## Adelaide freebie

**ADELAIDE** Sightseeing Tours is offering a free Adelaide City Highlights tour for customers who book two of its full-day trips.

Options include wine region and Kangaroo Island day excursions.

## Win a Variety Cruises experience

This month Travel Daily, Variety Cruises and Discover the World are giving readers a chance to win a yacht cruise experience on the Glories of Spain and Portugal cruise, sailing on board *M/S Panorama II*. The total prize value is AU\$7,710.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS



11. Which Variety Cruises yacht will sail the "Icelandic Cruises"?

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### Leisure Travel Consultant

Adelaide, Circa \$45-50k + Super, Ref: 2521SO1

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### Travel BDM/Partnership Manager

Sydney, \$88k Package + Car Allowance + Bonus, Ref: 2435PE6

My clients are a leading travel company, representing independent travel agents across the country. They value diversity as much as they value your independence. I am looking for a stand out individual that can hit the ground running and manage a portfolio of businesses as well as bring on new agencies to the network. This highly autonomous role offers great opportunity and huge earning potential. Do you see yourself working for an award winning company, who care about helping great people reach their full potential?

For more information please call Paul on (02) 9113 7272 or click [APPLY](#) now.

### Travel Destination Specialist

Melbourne, \$50-60k, Ref: 2394HC2

This is an excellent opportunity to break into a wholesale role with a leading brand dominating the travel industry. This unique travel company is expanding rapidly due to huge growth and they are looking for dedicated wholesale consultants to join their fun and busy team. If you are great at sales and can provide excellent service then this could be the move for you! Booking international travel packages; flights, accommodation and land based products, offering a fantastic service.

For more information please call Hannah on (03) 9988 0616 or click [APPLY](#) now.

### International Corporate Travel

Perth Inner Suburbs, OTE \$60-70k, Ref: 2568SO1

Due to their success, this organisation is now recruiting two Travel Managers to respond to the growing needs of its business. Working with a highly interesting client base, you will be managing their travel requirements and you will become an integral part of their national/international travel division. If you relish becoming part of a thriving and growing organisation, then this is the place for you. A minimum of 2 years' corporate travel experience required. Make the decision now!

For more information please call Sarah on (08) 6365 4313 or click [APPLY](#) now.



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