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Wednesday 25th Oct 2023

New role for Kwiatkowski EXCLUSIVE

QANTAS Executive Manager of Global Sales and Distribution, Igor Kwiatkowski, has taken a new role within Qantas Freight, with the move, along with the recent departure of former QF Domestic & International CEO Andrew David and their boss Alan Joyce, seen as possibly providing a new opportunity for the beleaguered carrier to reset its relationship with the travel industry.

Kwiatkowski has headed up QF global sales and distribution for over five years (TD 14 Mar 2018), a period which has been marked by significant disruption to the industry starting with the 01 Aug 2019 introduction of the Qantas Channel, which effectively eliminated GDS segment rebates.

In May 2021, Kwiatkowski also oversaw the decision to reduce travel agent base commission on international flights, telling TD at the time the move would save QF "tens of millions of dollars a year" which was a "central part" of the carrier's COVID-19 recovery plan. During his and David's tenure, Qantas has also significantly reduced its involvement with the

travel trade, even to the extent of relinquishing its foundation major sponsorship of the National Travel Industry Awards.

Last year Kwiatkowski unveiled initiatives offering agents lower pricing for fares via the Qantas Distribution Platform - over three years after forcing its introduction.

The commission cuts prompted fury across the industry as it was recovering from COVID, including a stinging rebuke from veteran Ian Mollison (TD 16 Jun 2022).

Kwiatkowski's move to Freight was advised to staff yesterday via an update from Cam Wallace, QF's new Head of International.

Wallace is well known through former senior roles at Air NZ, which saw the carrier enjoy strong trade engagement. BP

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features eight pages of the latest news including an A&K photo page as well as our **Luxury** feature page, plus full pages from:

- Wendy Wu
- Entire Travel Group
- Disney Destinations

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New from Wu!

WENDY Wu Tours has released its 2024/25 brochures, featuring a host of new tours and exciting destinations including South Korea, Taiwan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, India and more, with a launch Partner Flies Free offer - for more see **page nine** of today's **TD**.





 \checkmark

Seeing Times Square at night

Arctic camping under the Northern Lights in Greenland

Rethink your bucket list.



HLO targets FY25 recovery

HELLOWORLD Travel Limited believes it will return to pre-COVID levels of performance in 2024/25, with CEO Andrew Burnes today telling the company's AGM that HLO is "going from strength to strength". However that recovery is

contingent on increased airline capacity, with seat numbers out of Australia still significantly below the levels of 2019.

Burnes said premium air sales were recovering faster than the overall market, with Air Tickets TTV reaching 98% of FY19, while inbound division sales in Australia, NZ and Fiji are back at

AC in hot water over accessibility

AIR Canada is facing a public relations storm after leaving behind the wheelchair of Canada's Chief Accessibility Officer, Stephanie Cadieux, when she flew between Toronto and Vancouver last week.

The incident saw the top Government official post about her frustration on social media, describing it as "dehumanising", accusing the airline of "failing to treat these pieces of medical equipment as the essential extensions of the individual's bodies that they are".

Air Canada has apologised to Cadieux and promised to do better, after retrieving the wheelchair and delivering it to her 24 hours later. 60% of 2019 levels. All of Helloworld's operating segments have returned to profitability, while the acquisition of Express Travel Group boosted overall agent/broker numbers to about 2,400, Burnes noted.

Ongoing investment in HLO's proprietary systems has seen the mid-office ResWorld platform used by some 680 consultants.

"Our vision for ResWorld is for it to become the premier mid-office system for travel agents globally," Burnes said, with a rollout in Europe plotted for next year.

Burnes said demand for leisure travel was expected to continue, confirming the upcoming launch of a new luxury offering including an expanded Ultimate Journeys range (**TD** 06 Sep 2021) and an "exclusive range of premium hotels with tailored special offerings for our key networks". BP

Ruby court ruling

CARNIVAL Australia says it's considering this morning's Federal Court judgement which found the Mar 2020 departure of *Ruby Princess* from Sydney in the infancy of the COVID-19 pandemic breached Australian Consumer Law.

The class action ruling cited "misleading representations" from Princess Cruises, but the judge also said the lead plaintiff had already been sufficiently compensated - more in today's issue of **Cruise Weekly**.

Disney kids deal

CHILDREN'S tickets to Disneyland can now be purchased for a limited time in a special promotion from Disney Destinations which launched this today for guests aged three to nine years - details via wholesalers and on the **last page**.



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Qantas axes MU pact

QANTAS has formally walked away from its second big deal in as many weeks, with the carrier confirming it has canned plans to extend a cooperative agreement with China Eastern Airlines.

The development follows intense security of the proposed new deal placed on the Flying Kangaroo by the ACCC, and comes less than a week after the airline backed out of a full acquisition of Alliance Aviation over competition concerns (*TD* 19 Oct).

Under the terms of the initial agreement, the two carriers coordinated efforts on pricing, schedules and marketing on the Shanghai route, but plans to extend the joint business were given a draft red light by the ACCC last month (*TD* 15 Sep).

At the time, the competition regulator said the alliance would potentially "breach competition laws", giving the two airlines the "opportunity and incentive to increase prices...by limiting or delaying the introduction of additional capacity on the Sydney-Shanghai route as pax demand grows."

Qantas stopped servicing the Sydney-Shanghai route during COVID-19 but is due to resume daily flights next weekend.

A spokesperson for the Aussie carrier told **Travel Daily** the airlines have commenced a process to unwind the joint business over the coming weeks.

"This includes an end to the coordination of pricing and



schedules, and the removal of joint marketing material," the carrier confirmed.

"To ensure there is no impact on customers, Qantas and China Eastern will honour all existing bookings, including the frequent flyer benefits and lounge access customers enjoyed under the joint business," QF added.

"China Eastern remains an important partner for Qantas and our codeshare agreement will continue on routes between Australia and China which both airlines don't operate." AB

VA's big promotion

VIRGIN Australia is offering a range of discounted domestic airfares and double the Status Credits for frequent flyers on a range of eligible bookings.

Discounted airfares, which include domestic routes from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide, are available to book until 26 Oct for travel dates between Jan and Jun 2024, while the status match promotion is on offer until 30 Oct.

Interested parties can access more information on both deals by **CLICKING HERE**.



NCL melts for wellness



MORE milestones are melting away for NCL's Walk for Wellness challenge, with the cruise line revealing that participants have already stepped over 200,000km.



The 'step-tacular' achievement was announced alongside the news of more than \$10,000 being donated to Mood Active, with the collective efforts seeing participants virtually arrive in Tromso, Norway, located 400km north of the Arctic Circle.

Individual prizes have also been given away, with Angie Reilly from Flight Centre scoring herself a \$200 Woolworths gift voucher for her dream of dining at Teppanyaki on board an NCL vessel (**inset left**).

Another prize was awarded to Leanne Johnston from TravelManagers WA, who enjoyed an American BBQ feast similar to a Cadillac Diner on board NCL (inset below).

But our personal favourite (**above**) came from Samantha Lang from Travel Associates Gungahlin, who said her walk this week looked a little something like Naples as she enjoyed her delicious iced confection. *AB*





t 1300 799 220



Wednesday 25th Oct 2023

itravel expands presence in SA



ITRAVEL has officially opened its newest franchise store this week in South Australia, with itravel Naracoorte swinging open its doors to travellers.

"We are thrilled to have welcomed our newest franchise member itravel Naracoorte; this is an exciting time for itravel with the continuous growth of our membership group, we are thrilled to be building on our presence in South Australia," itravel National Business

Development Manager Jo Howard enthused.

CEO Steve Labroski added that since the beginning of 2023, the business is now on track to achieving 28% national network growth through its combined business models of mobiles, link affiliates and franchisees, which he said "is encouraging."

The Naracoorte store is headed up by Therese Oliver, who is pictured alongside Labroski at the official opening. AB

Travel & Cruise keep dreaming. Travel inspiration for your clients' next holiday!

CTM launches share buyback

CORPORATE Travel

Management (CTM) this morning announced it will re-purchase as much as \$100 million worth of its shares in an on-market buyback, as part of new capital management initiatives aiming to boost shareholder returns.

The year-long program complements the company's intentions to pay dividends in the future, according to Company Secretary Shelley Sorrenson.

The buy-back will reduce the number of shares on issue and thus theoretically increase the value of the remaining shares.

The announcement came in the lead-up to today's CTM annual general meeting, during which Chairman Ewen Crouch highlighted the company's strong revenue and earnings growth momentum into 2024.

He also cited CTM's annual Global Customer Survey in May which indicated a "growing

appetite for corporate travel". Crouch addressed the "first strike" against the company's Remuneration Report at its 2022 AGM, saying this year the Board had taken into account feedback from shareholders to provide greater transparency in relation to short-term executive incentives and clarifying policies around performance outcomes.

Weekly

Click to read

The CTM Chair also confirmed that the company was building on its existing UK Government contracts, having "been most recently called upon to assist with the repatriation of UK citizens from Israel". BP

HA AKL seasonal

HAWAIIAN Airlines is axing its mid-year winter flights between Auckland and Honolulu, with GDS indicating the current year-round service will move to a seasonal operation from 03 Aug 2024.

INSPIRATION?

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CEO faces naked truth on massage



THE usual gripe from company employees is that they don't get to see enough of their CEO, but it appears over at AirAsia, the executive team might be having an issue with overexposure.

CEO of the budget airline Tony Fernandes recently made the bizarre decision to strip down during a board room meeting for a much-needed massage.

Perhaps even more mindboggling was the airline boss's decision to post an image of the move on LinkedIn along with the caption: "got to love Indonesia and AirAsia culture that I can have a massage and do a management meeting".

Fernandes' post was deleted days later however following a deluge of criticism, with many claiming it to be unprofessional.

Compare our travel

WISE and Silent Insurance's retail brand Travel Protect is now listed on Compare the Market.

The brand is relatively new to Australian travellers, having only formally launched Down Under in Feb of this year.

> HURTIGRUTEN EXPEDITIONS

All the way with the USA

EXCLUSIVE

AUSTRALIAN travellers to the United States are expected to reach historical highs of 1.5 million a year by the end of 2024, a figure which was last achieved eight years ago in 2015.

Data compiled by Brand USA and seen by **Travel Daily** shows that Aussie numbers were declining even before the pandemic hit, coinciding with a global drop in tourists to the US in 2016 as part of a phenomenon dubbed at the time as "the Trump Slump" by economists.

Since 2021, Aussie visitation has been rising sharply from a low post-pandemic base of just 54,000 travellers, with 2023 already seeing 960,000 Aussies make their way to America.

The data also showed that an encouraging 70% of Aussies are likely to visit the US over the next two years, with close to a quarter expressing an interest to head to the land of the free in the next six to 12 months.

Not surprisingly, New York and California are leading the pack for destination interest with 24% and 21% respectively, edging out Florida (19%) and Hawaii (17%).

Other popular US states in the travel plans of Aussies include Alaska, Colorado, Arizona, New Jersey and the home of bright lights of Las Vegas, Nevada.

Factors drawing Aussies back to the country in strong numbers were shown to be America's physical beauty, with natural



features, sightseeing options, and beach quality all ranking highly as incentives to travel.

Most Australians are spending between one and two weeks to plan their trip to the United States, with online travel agents and search engines leading the way as web-based resources being used to prepare for bookings, ahead of social media, travel review websites, airline platforms and travel guide websites.

Solo and adult couples are also the most common travel profiles heading over, ahead of families with multiple children and large friendship groups. *AB*

Rex contract wins

REX Group offshoot National Jet Express (NJE) has secured several new FIFO mining contracts in Qld.

Among the charter wins are twice weekly flights between Cairns-Townsville-Moranbah, weekly Brisbane to Moranbah services for BHP Mitsubishi Alliance, as well as a new weekly flight between Brisbane and Emerald and Moranbah.

NJE has also scored a weekly charter contract between Brisbane and Rockhampton.

> Ends **31**

Oct!



DWAYNE "The Rock" Johnson is reportedly very unhappy with his latest wax work unveiled at a French museum, after the replica's skin tone looked decidedly whiter than the part-Samoan mega star is in real life.

When unveiled last month by the Grevin Museum, the figure became fodder for comedians and critics, with one comic observing the wax work looked more like a member of the British aristocracy than the mixed-race action hero.

Responding on Instagram, The Rock told his legions of fans that his team had reached out to the museum to "update" the figure, stating "some important improvements" will be made, "starting with my skin".

A spokesperson for the Grevin Museum responding to the controversy said the team had already worked hard to remedy the skin tone issue and that the effigy was back on display.



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Wed 25th October 2023



BICTON Travel Perth with A&K staff.

A&K discovers the "Road Less Travelled"

THE Abercrombie & Kent team hit the road over the last two weeks on its annual roadshow to spread the word about all things A&K.

Over 500 trade partners came out in force in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney to discover the "Road Less Travelled".

A&K's local experts in Sri Lanka, Africa and Saudi Arabia, Crystal and Sanctuary Retreats shared valuable product updates and travel insights.

Arriving to the beats of Afro Lanka drummers, the evenings were a roaring success all round with great prizes drawn.

Each event gave away a five-night African getaway thanks to A&K and Sanctuary Retreats, with the major prize at each event being an A&K Sri Lanka famil with return air travel thanks to Sri Lankan Airlines.

Book an A&K Sales Manager appointment via salessupport@abercrombiekent.com.au.



AFRICA winner Melbourne - Joanne McFadyen, MTA; and Sri Lanka winner Melbourne - Susie Casalis, MTA.





AFRICA winner Brisbane -Amy Mortimer, Clean Cruising.



SRI Lanka winner Adelaide - Adam Crossman, Travel Associates Glenelg.





THE cupcakes at the venue - yum!

SRI Lanka winner Sydney - Lisa Knight, Travel Associates Cronulla.



w www.traveldaily.com.au

DRUM performances to welcome the attendees.



WINDSTAR DELAYS MIDDLE EAST DEBUT

WINDSTAR Cruises has become the latest brand to withdraw from the troubled Middle Eastern region, with a release overnight confirming the luxury line has deferred its first season in the area due to rising military tensions.

The cruise line's Star Legend (pictured) was initially scheduled to sail to a host of Middle Eastern destinations from Dec this year, but has now been redeployed to the Mediterranean to service itineraries linking ports such as Barcelona, Nice, Florence, Marseille, and Rome.

The postponed Middle Eastern season will now go ahead in Nov 2024 at the earliest, joining a number of operators who have opted to withdraw from places like Israel and Lebanon until there appears to be a dialling down of the Hamas/Israeli war.

Windstar is now trumping the benefits of visiting Europe in the



winter season 2023/24 aboard Legend, with the cooler weather, fewer crowds and improved access to iconic tourist attractions viewed as a key selling point for potential cruisers.

"Our small ships and intimate atmosphere provide a truly unique way to explore Europe's winter wonderlands, while enjoying the magic of the season and the comforts and casual luxury that Windstar is known for," Windstar Cruises President Christopher Prelog said.

Highlights of the season, which

Club Med announces three new properties

CLUB Med overnight announced its first resort in South Africa as well as other developments including in South America and Borneo.

The company said the new openings will reinforce its shift to exclusively offering four- and five-star products, as well as ambitions to expand by three to five openings or renovations each year.

The new Club Med Tinley

will be situated in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province featuring a surflifestyle concept as well as the opportunity to stay on a Big Five Game Reserve.

Club Med Gramado will be the brand's first Exclusive Collection (5-star) resort in South America and its fourth in Brazil, while Club Med Borneo is scheduled to open in 2025 in Kota Kinabalu.

will run from Dec to Apr 2024, include 16 sailings between Rome and Barcelona (or reverse) visiting cities such as Florence & Pisa in Italy, as well as Marseille in France and Barcelona.

While far from ideal, Windstar said the schedule change has presented the line with the opportunity to position its all-suite Star Legend in Cannes in early Dec to coincide with the International Luxury Travel Market conference.

The line's new winter sailings will go on sale 06 Nov. AB

Seabourn Solis

SEABOURN Cruise Line has unveiled Solis, a new fine-dining venue which will launch aboard Seabourn Quest in Jan next year before rolling out across Seabourn Encore, Ovation and Sojourn.

With "whimsical cocktails, vibrant plating and unique flavours", Solis will also see the end of Seabourn's eightyear culinary partnership with Chef Thomas Keller.

Uniworld UK move

luxury@traveldaily.com.au

Wednesday 25th Oct 2023

CHRIS Townson, the MD of Uniworld Boutique River Cruises in UK/Ireland, has confirmed he will shortly relocate with his family from Manchester to Brisbane, but will continue to work in his role taking "hybrid working to a new level".

The move will not have any impact on the Uniworld Australian/NZ team led by Alice Ager, with The Travel Corporation brand also confirming several UK moves including the promotion of Angela Sloan to become Sales Director.

"We have great partners and a super team that we will make sure we continue to deliver the very best across the board," Townson said.

Crown tees off

CROWN Resorts and Golf Australia have today announced a year-round Official Partner arrangement as part of a "new direction" aiming to recapture Crown's "original spirit as a leading curator of exceptional experiences, entertainment and driving tourism".

The hospitality and gaming giant said the deal will see it as a Major Partner of the upcoming 2023 HANDA Australian Open tournament.

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Wednesday 25th Oct 2023

ACCOMMODATION

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InterContinental Sydney has redesigned its property from top-to-bottom with a new sustainable approach. In a partnership with Woods Bagot. The makeover has brought in a "once-in-a-generation" makeover to the 171-year-old hotel. All of its questrooms

now feature a distinct blue and green palette, exerting a timeless elegance throughout. The Treasury, the hotel's famed gathering space, has also been revitalised, surrounded by its gorgeous arched balconies.



To celebrate the opening of Balcony Bar at Sydney's Coogee Bay Hotel, the dining space is offering new Mediterraneaninspired menus for a limited time. Coinciding with the summer season, the Balcony Bar features an array of dishes, such as Share Plates including grilled octopus with minted potatoes &

olives, Pub Faves of wagyu beef burger with fries, fish and chips, iconic desserts of zesty lemon curd, fried pizza sticks and so much more.



Guests can now enjoy the new wellness learning centre and concept store, Jamu & Spice, at AYANA Resort Bali's shopping district. The store is a first-of-its-kind establishment at the resort bringing a wealth of wellness and Indonesian cultural

appreciation experiences. Visitors are invited to a 15-minute workshop to create traditional jamu blends and herbal teas, as well as several different skin care products.



Hampton Inn Harriman Woodbury in New York has completed a six-month renovation of its 136 rooms. The project has revitalised the interior and exterior of the property, where quests are met with mix with brightly coloured contrasts of walls and carpeting. Each of the rooms also includes a 55-inch TV, coffee maker,

new mini-fridge and microwave.



The 264-key Amora Beach Resort Phuket in Thailand has received an extensive refurbishment costing over US\$10 million. Along with the new aesthetics in its guestrooms, the beach resort has also introduced new concepts at its Nora Beach

Club, Amora Wellness Centre with massage and fitness facilities, Isla restaurant, kids' club, two pools, as well as several of its event spaces.



ATEC is a header the game



WOMEN'S football star and Olympian, Elise Kellond-Knight will be kicking plenty of goals with attendees at the upcoming ATEC Meeting Place in Adelaide, which is scheduled to take place next week (TD 13 Oct).

Affectionately referred to as KK. Kellond-Knight will deliver an inspirational talk for the 550 guests, including her own professional challenges associated with being sidelined for the Matildas FIFA World Cup challenge because of injury.

Qantas surprises

QANTAS launched a 72-hour surprise sale yesterday which has seen more than 60 of its domestic services discounted.

Economy fares lead in from \$99 one-way (Launceston-Melbourne), with the carrier spruiking that over 40 of its routes are on sale for under \$150.

The promo applies to select travel periods in 2023 & 2024, and follows QF flagging a 3.5% increase in tix prices from 27 Oct.

"During her address to the event, KK will reveal how she made it, connect to the history of the Matildas, and share the resilience, hard work and unrelenting determination which saw the team rise to carry the excitement and expectations of the nation," ATEC said.

Meeting Place will take place over three days from 30 Oct to 01 Nov in venues across Adelaide including the Adelaide Hills. AB

On the Go in China

ON THE Go Tours has introduced 10 new Signature Range tours to China departing from May 2024, heralding the return to the destination after three-and-a-half vears.

"Our tour style lends itself to destinations like China, where language and culture barriers can deter some travellers," Global Sales Director Carl Cross said.

He said passengers experience the best of the destination with four-star accom and an Englishspeaking tour guide.

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All Rocky Mountaineer 2024 Bookings, which include Air Canada (agent can book air themselves) made with Entire Travel Group from 1 October 2023 to 28 February 2024 will go into the draw to win a dream trip to Canada for you and your companion. Every booking goes into the draw, the more bookings you make more chances you have of winning.*

What do I need to do to ensure I am entered into draw?

Please e-mail canada@entiretravel.com.au with your Entire Travel Group booking number and your Air Canada Reference Number.





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Disneyland Resort Limited-time Kid's Ticket Offer!

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Disneyland CALIFORNIA

Beginning **today**, guests can purchase a **child's ticket** (valid only for children ages 3-9) to a *Disneyland* Resort theme park. Guests will be able to choose from 1, 2 or 3-Day Park tickets, with upgrades such as Park Hopper tickets or *Disney Genie*+ service also available to add-on.

These limited-time child tickets are a great value and will be valid for use between January 8, 2024 – March 10, 2024 (no blockout dates, subject to park reservation availability).*

For more information and bookings, contact your preferred wholesaler today!

*Offer tickets valid for use beginning 1/8/24, and expire 13 days after the first day of use or on 3/10/24, whichever occurs first. To enter a park, both a theme park reservation and a valid ticket for the same park on the same date is required. Theme park reservations for Kids' Special Offer Ticket holders are limited in number and subject to the availability of park reservations allocated to the Kids' Special Offer Tickets as determined by Disney and theme park capacity. Reservation availability for Kids' Special Offer Ticket holders is not guaranteed for any date, and reservations may be difficult to get for any particular date, especially as the ticket expiration date approaches. To ensure best availability, make reservations early. On any given date, park reservations may be available for general theme park tickets even though park reservations allocated to the Kids' Special Offer Tickets are fully reserved. Kids' Special Offer Ticket holders are not entitled to any reservations Disney makes available to others. Subject to restrictions and change or cancellation without notice. Sales may be paused from time to time or terminated at any time. ©2023 Disney