



MTAs Amanda Washington & Kim Newton



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## Joyce exits Qantas early

**THE** flood of negative headlines about Qantas over the last couple of weeks has led CEO Alan Joyce to move his retirement forward, announcing this morning that he will depart the business effective today (**TD** breaking news).

The under-fire airline chief said it was “clear” the time had come for the carrier “to move ahead with its renewal as a priority”, with the news following accusations of Qantas misleading customers on bookings (**TD** 31 Aug) and a \$10m personal bonus for Joyce (**TD** 04 Sep) at a time of record profits and high airfares.

“The best thing I can do under these circumstances is to bring forward my retirement and hand over to Vanessa and the new management team,” he said.

“There have been many ups and downs and there is clearly much work still to be done, especially to make sure we always deliver for our customers, but I leave knowing that the company is fundamentally strong and has a bright future,” Joyce added.

Incoming CEO Vanessa Hudson will now assume the position at a challenging time for

Qantas’ public image, with her appointment to be formally voted on at the airline’s next Annual General Meeting in Nov.

The ripple effect of the decision will see Rob Marcolina take on the role of Group CFO earlier than planned, replacing Hudson as she moves to the top job.

Meanwhile, Transport Workers Union National Secretary Michael Kaine did not pull any punches with his appraisal, labelling Joyce’s early exit as “the first good decision the Qantas board has made for a very long time”.

ATIA CEO Dean Long also added that his body looks forward to working with new CEO Vanessa Hudson to build a “positive and collaborative relationship” moving forward. **AB**

### Today’s issue of **TD**

**Travel Daily** today features seven pages of news including our **Sustainability** page plus a special update from **Budgetly** and full pages from:

- **APT**
- **Emirates**
- **Cruiseco**

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## Cruiseco Platinum

**HUNTER** Travel Group, Clean Cruising and Phil Hoffmann Travel have joined forces as the foundation members of a new invitation-only Platinum Club within Helloworld's Cruiseco. The trio plans to curate exclusive cruise packages and secure joint group allocations, as well as promote ad-hoc offers presented by cruise line partners. "As the group hits various milestones the intent is to extend the membership opportunity and criteria to like-minded and cruise-focused agents," according to HLO Executive Director Cinzia Burnes - more details on **page 10**.

## BNE blasts new caps plan

A **PARLIAMENTARY** proposal from the Greens party to introduce a curfew and flight caps for Brisbane Airport has been slammed by the facility's operator as having a "brutal impact on Queensland's economy". Brisbane-based Greens aviation spokesperson Elizabeth Watson-Brown yesterday announced plans to introduce a Bill to the next sitting of federal parliament, with the proposed legislation set to eliminate a "huge swathe of international services and thousands of seats per week". BNE spokesperson, Stephen

Beckett, said "it beggars belief that in the middle of a national debate about Australians accessing affordable air travel, that the Greens would want to slash international services as well as thousands of services to regional Queensland". The proposed 10pm curfew would wipe out existing services from Qatar Airways, Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Singapore, Qantas and Virgin Australia. **BP**

## APT wants your vote

**APT** Travel Group is calling on the industry to help get it to the winners' podium, after being nominated in two categories for the NTIAs, including 'Most Popular River Cruise Operator' and 'Most Outstanding Tour Operator (Global)' - see **page 8**.



## CVFR goes national

**CVFR** Consolidation has expanded its sales team across the country, completing the picture with the appointment of Matthew Nickelson as its State Sales Manager for Queensland. Nickelson is well known to the trade through his long association with Thai Airways, with Group Chief Operating Officer, Nidhi Nijhawan commenting that "CVFR Consolidation now has an even stronger sales team in place around Australia". "Our focus has always been to put our agents first, and we want to ensure we deliver the very best of service to our agents, from sales and operations through to technology," she said. "Some consolidators recently needed to make changes to feel more secure about their future, but CVFR Consolidation has always been confident, and that confidence continues to grow," Nidjhawan added.

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## Budgetly benefits

**BUDGETLY** is providing tour guides with a better way of managing their tour expenses.

The expense management company offers pre-loaded VISA cards and as well as a handy app with a receipt-capture feature - learn more on [page 11](#).

## Travel ad spend bonanza

### EXCLUSIVE

**ADVERTISING** spend by the travel industry has increased 10.4% YOY for the month of Jul according to Standard Media Index (SMI).

The strong result was largely down to significant growth from the subcategories of airlines, up 20.4%, and ocean cruising, which rose 48% on Jul last year.

SMI accesses actual spend from media buying groups and uses the data to report on the advertising spend statistics across media categories as well as industry sectors.

MD of SMI APAC, Jane Ractliffe, told *Travel Daily* that the travel category had so far grown ad spend 18% in 2023 as it continued to recover from the COVID downturn.

Overall, advertising spend was down 1.3% YOY in Jul, although it's important to note that Jul 2022 was a record result.

Chris Walton, Managing Director of Nunn Media, which holds the media account for Silversea Cruises, lauded the results and said it was largely being driven by "older, affluent Australians" who wanted to travel in style.

"This cohort, with mortgages largely paid off, are to a large extent insulated from any cost-of-living crisis and have money to spend," he told *Travel Daily*.

"Indeed, higher interest rates mean higher savings and term deposit rates which is a boon for many of these guys.

"They want to travel and can afford to do so in relative luxury, so there is significant clamour for their business."

The largest spending subcategory within travel so far in 2023 has been the domestic tourism agency market, but SMI figures show its spend is back 15% YOY after it registered significant extra bookings in 2022 to promote local travel post-COVID. *DF*

## CATO in Canberra

**THE** Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) has put its case forward this week in Canberra for the continuation of the Reviving International Tourism Grant Program (RITG).

Talks with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) saw MD Brett Jardine and Chair Dennis Bunnik discuss the need for a seamless flow of funding under Stream 1, part 2, of the program.

"The RITG has been instrumental in empowering tour operators and wholesalers to re-establish crucial international links with supply chains," MD Jardine noted.

CATO's dialogue with DFAT, through a meeting with the new First Assistant Secretary Ciara Spencer, also saw insights discussed around booking trends, and industry evolution.

## Rail Europe peaks

**RAIL** Europe has added nine popular Swiss mountains to its product offering, including the Gornergrat and Mt Pilatus.

The mountain journeys can be booked as standalone experiences or as part of the Swiss Travel Pass.

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## Window Seat

WE'VE all heard of kid-free cruises, but how about kid-free flights?

Turkish carrier Corendon Airlines has just announced a new 'no kids zone' policy on its 10-hour service from Amsterdam to Curacao.

From 03 Nov, passengers will need to be at least 16 years old to sit in the front of the aircraft, which has curtains and walls separating it from the family zone in the rear of the plane.

The airline expects the news will be a relief for both child-free travellers looking to escape the irritating noise caused by some children and infants, as well as parents travelling with infants, who can enjoy their flight without worrying about how much noise their child is making.

## Cruiseabout hires

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has made a number of key appointments across its newly-launched Cruiseabout and CruiseHQ brands.

Darren Lloyd has been appointed Brand Leader of Cruiseabout, its newest brand in the leisure portfolio.

Lloyd joins having previously held senior positions at Escape Travel, Student Flights and BYOJet over the last 24 years.

FCTG Leisure CEO James Kavanagh said Lloyd will provide "a modernised and refreshed retail cruise brand".

Meanwhile, FCTG's B2B cruise wholesaler, CruiseHQ, has brought in Tina Giannapolous as Head of Operations, Carina Mullen as Head of Product, Caitlyn Paris as Marketing Manager and Viktoryia Schliazhko in the position of Business Development Manager.

FCTG flagged more recruitment for both brands shortly.

## Azamara on deck for C360



THIS week's Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia Cruise360 conference in Brisbane is attracting a host of high-profile international presenters, including Azamara Cruises' Chief Sales Officer International, Patrice Willoughby. Willoughby (pictured left) is one of four experts speaking on a panel about emerging cruise destinations and the key role they play in fuelling the expansion of the global cruise sector.

Her Down Under visit will also see Willoughby embark on a packed road trip in Queensland with Azamara Director of Sales Australia/NZ, Victoria Chigwidden, and the business development team to celebrate Azamara's latest developments.

"Our new Australia/NZ contact centre has received excellent feedback from our trade partners since opening in Feb," Willoughby

said, noting that bookings for the upcoming Australia and New Zealand sailings are even better than anticipated.

In addition, "2024/25 sales for close-to home cruising are already strong...these results are fantastic and highlight the popularity of Australia's back-to-back country-intensive itineraries with local and overseas cruises.

"Destination immersion and all-inclusive small-ship cruising is what we're all about," she said.





Local Azamara visits will see *Azamara Journey* sailing from Dec this year through until Feb 2024, while *Azamara Onward* will visit during her World Cruise in Mar next year while in Dec 2024 *Azamara Pursuit* will undertake a local season.

Cruise360 kicks off tomorrow evening at the Brisbane Convention Centre - follow **Cruise Weekly** for all the details.

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MSC CRUISES NATIONAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY AWARDS 2023 NOMINEE

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MSC Cruises is delighted and deeply honoured to be nominated in the NTIA 2023 Most Popular Ocean Cruise Category.

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## Judy has TravelManagers spirit



**NSW-BASED** Personal Travel Manager, Judy Gillings, took home the revered Barry Mayo Spirit award from last weekend's TravelManagers conference.

The award, which was renamed in honour of long-time House of Travel Australia Director Barry Mayo when he retired last year, aims to recognise an individual whose "everyday attitude and principles inspire and pervade the thoughts, feelings and actions of all TravelManagers".

Gillings is **pictured** accepting the accolade on stage during the conference gala dinner at the Te Pae Conference Centre in Christchurch.

Other winners included an elated Louise McCarthy, named TravelManager of the year, while the event included a gala red carpet walked by Tony Soden and Frank Levey of Rocky Mountaineer (**right**).



There were also fabulous frocks a-plenty, with lots more pics from the event at [facebook.com/traveldaily](https://facebook.com/traveldaily).



## ATIA UPDATE

from Ingrid Fraser, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy



**IT'S** been a whirlwind (almost) two months since I joined ATIA as the Director of Public Policy & Advocacy, and I've really enjoyed getting to know our members, learning more about what's important to the travel industry from a policy perspective and seeing how we can make it happen.

At a time when Australians need professional travel advice more than ever, a hot topic of conversation has been how to address the skills and workforce challenges the industry is facing.

Last week I was appointed as a member of SkillsEQuipped, the recently established Jobs and Skills Council funded by the Federal Government to support industry engagement in relation to skills and training issues. I'll be representing ATIA members as SkillsEQuipped works towards developing a workforce plan for the travel and tourism sector and reviews VET training products to ensure they meet the changing needs of the industry.

Also on the workforce front, last week I hosted a meeting of ATIA's National Taskforce for Skills and Careers where we discussed

current workforce issues as well as opportunities to provide input to Government and pursue priorities for the industry.

Topics included attracting staff to this exciting and vibrant industry, ensuring appropriate government support for traineeships, suitability of current training packages and recognition of microcredentials. Real insights from industry are invaluable when engaging with government about the needs of the sector.

With a spotlight on competition in the aviation sector, last week I hosted travel and tourism industry stakeholders to hear from the Assistant Minister for Competition at the National Press Club. It's great to see that the recently announced Competition Policy Review will include the competitiveness of Australia's aviation sector. We're looking forward to contributing to that review and highlighting the benefits a competitive aviation sector brings.

This week Dean and I are again heading to Canberra to engage with key members of Parliament on a range of matters.

The rebranding to ATIA has already proven to be beneficial from a political perspective, leading to a clearer understanding of our membership base and a keenness to engage in discussions around the importance of travel.

## Jet Airways faces fraud allegations

**NARESH** Goyal, the founder of defunct Indian carrier Jet Airways, has been arrested over claims he diverted money loaned to the airline for personal use.

Goyal has been remanded in custody over allegations that between 2011 and 2017 about US\$60 million was transferred to offshore accounts and spent on purchases and expenses of his family members.

Jet Airways was once the second biggest airline in India and operated a codeshare partnership with Australia's Qantas, but collapsed more than four years ago (**TD** 18 Apr 2019), with creditor claims amounting to more than US\$3.6 billion.

## BKK Autograph

**MARRIOTT** International has debuted a new Autograph Collection property in Bangkok, with the Madi Paidi hotel said to "capture the passion of Thailand's vibrant capital".

It's the first Autograph hotel in the country, offering 56 guest rooms and suites in colours inspired by some of Thailand's precious gemstones.

## Bamboo shuffle

**BAMBOO** Airways will increase its flights from Melbourne to Ho Chi Minh City from two to three weekly from the end of next month, while at the same time discontinuing its weekly Melbourne-Hanoi service as well as axing Hanoi-London Gatwick.



### Building wonders

**PRINCESS** Cruises will support community-based conservation efforts in New Zealand by offering funding from its Princess Local Partnerships program to Dunedin-based organisation, Natures Wonders.

The new collaboration will support building habitats for an emerging Blue Penguin colony in Otago and the preservation of the last major yellow-eye penguin colony on the mainland of New Zealand.

### Qualmark GSTC

**TOURISM** New Zealand's corporate subsidiary, Qualmark, has become the first in the country to gain GSTC-Recognized Status from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for its Sustainable Tourism Business Criteria.

The mark of approval, which comes after Qualmark refreshed its criteria in May, confirms that it has been independently verified as a quality tourism business, and provides confidence to its more than 2,000 tourism business members that achieving Qualmark certification meets global standards of sustainability.

## FJ MARKS DEBUT OF A350 SAF FLIGHT

**FIJI** Airways made a very green statement when it welcomed its latest Airbus A350-900 XWB to the fleet late last week (**TD** 31 Aug), with the aircraft arriving in Nadi powered by a Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) blend.

The Fijian arrival of the jet, named Island of Vatuete, from Singapore marked the first time the carrier has ever operated a flight using SAF with the fuel produced from a combination of used cooking oils, agricultural residues, and municipal waste.

Producing up to 80% less carbon emissions than conventional jet fuel, Fiji Airways said the flight was an important moment in its vision of reducing



its carbon footprint in the future.

"Whilst we may be a small airline, we have a bold sustainability vision," CEO Andre Viljoen insisted.

"We believe that every airline, regardless of size, can help contribute to the preservation of our planet, by using SAF, Fiji Airways can make a significant contribution to the fight against climate change and we are

exploring options to secure additional supplies," he added.

In addition to offering a cleaner way to travel, the new A350s also provide Fiji Airways with an additional 15,000 extra seats, the ability to fly for a longer distance and increase the size of its network, as well as a superior cabin with lie-flat beds in Business class, and more space and comfort in Economy. **AB**

### A self-sustaining eco-paradise in Qld

**A PRISTINE** tropical resort near K'gari, at the southern tip of Queensland's World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, has become self-sustainable after implementing a hybrid energy system.

Switching to a new system with almost 20 times the solar capacity of a typical home, Lady Elliot Island Eco-Resort can power the whole island's population of around 200 people, as well as water thousands of trees in the resort's nursery.

The resort's Project Manager, Robert Thomas, said the

transition also saved the resort more than \$300,000 per year.

Previously, the island's only power source was diesel arriving by barge from Gladstone, a 15-hour boat journey, which meant severe weather events could leave the island in the dark.

Transporting diesel across the ocean also presented the risk of potential oil spills within a highly protected 'Green Zone' and marine sanctuary for over 1,200 species of marine life.

"We wanted to do something more in line with our focus on being eco-friendly," Thomas said.

### MSC fizz-a-loos

**MSC** Cruises Australia has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable practices by partnering with Christine's Apothecary to introduce Fizz-a-Loos in its offices - an eco-friendly toilet-cleaning solution.

The cruise brand's staff were rewarded with a packet of the dissolvable cubes, which are all natural and safe for septic systems.

PR & Comms Manager Leisa Chell said the company "aims to inspire positive change within both the corporate office and beyond".

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## MONEY

**WELCOME** to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

### AU\$1 = US\$0.646

**AFTER** a rough couple of weeks, Australians can finally breathe easy as the currency is seeing green shoots across the global market - scoring over three cents against the South African rand and being slightly up against a strong American dollar.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of Australia is due for a decision on interest rates today, with pundits predicting no changes.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.646
UK	£0.512
NZ	\$1.085
Euro	€0.599
Japan	¥94.69
Thailand	฿22.78
China	¥4.683
South Africa	12.36
Canada	\$0.879
Crude oil	US\$86.84

## Perth Zoo ups game

**PERTH** Zoo has selected Compass Group Australia as its commercial catering partner for its new cafe precinct and function centre, which opens this spring.

The upcoming area will feature three outlets, including dine-in and takeaway options, a coffee and wine bar, as well as a function and events centre.

The new facilities are part of the Perth Zoo Master Plan 2040, backed by a \$50 million investment from the WA Govt.

## Air China promotes in MEL



**AIR** China's Melbourne office held its first major brand promotion event last week at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Key stakeholders attended the event, which included a winter-spring product presentation and half-year celebration dinner, signalling tourism's recovery between China and Australia.

The evening also saw the carrier announce its decision to switch to the larger A350-900 aircraft on the Melbourne-Beijing route,

## Massive Abu Dhabi terminal prepares

**ABU** Dhabi International Airport (AUH) is preparing to open its new passenger terminal in Nov.

Boasting an expansive area spanning over 700,000m<sup>2</sup>, the new Terminal A will have the capacity to process 45 million travellers in a year, more than double the projected 2023 levels.

Passengers can also enjoy facilities such as various "relaxation zones", spas and up to 163 food and beverage outlets, with the opening of the new terminal to be suited for both leisure and business travellers.

demonstrating its confidence in the local market.

Pengyu Han, GM of Air China Melbourne office (**pictured**), spoke at the event, emphasising the airline's commitment to providing passengers with a comfortable, safe, and efficient flying experience.

The evening concluded with interactive lottery sessions and souvenirs given out to guests.

## MH Indian expansion

**MALAYSIA** Airlines will operate new services to three Indian cities during the northern winter period, with the first route taking off on 08 Nov from Kuala Lumpur to Amristar, India.

Thiruvananthapuram services will commence the following day, both operating twice weekly, while flights between KL and Ahmedabad will start flying four times weekly from 01 Dec.

The airline is also preparing to ramp up its frequencies in other key markets including Australia, boosting flights to Melbourne and Sydney from 14 flights a week to 15 and 16 flights respectively, starting Dec.

## Biggest tourist traps

**AUSTRALIA** has avoided making an appearance in a new top 100 list of 'tourist traps', which was created using a recent analysis of 23.2 million Google reviews of the 500 most popular tourist attractions in the world.

The United States claimed the top five spots in the list of the overpriced, with the Four Corners Monument in Arizona, declared the number one tourist trap in the world, followed by the Salem Witch Museum in Massachusetts.

The analysis also revealed the Blue Lagoon in Iceland and Penang Hill in Malaysia as the top tourist traps in Europe and Asia.

New Zealand appeared in the top 100 list six times, with the Hobbiton Movie Set, Sky Tower, and Waitomo Glowworm Caves all considered overpriced.

## Bunnik adds two

**BUNNIK** Tours has expanded its range of Multi-Activity and Short Tours with two brand-new itineraries, Vietnam Adventure and North Macedonia.

The Vietnam tour is ideal for active, adventure-seeking travellers, and combines traditional sightseeing with exciting activities such as cycling and kayaking.

Highlights include cruising the waters of Ha Long Bay, trekking the tiered rice terraces in Sapa and visiting the Cu Chi Tunnels.

Also on offer is the new North Macedonia itinerary, a short tour that begins in the country's capital, Skopje, before making its way through Ohrid, Bitola and Kratovo over 10 days, with guests to enjoy lunch in a local family home in Brajcino.



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- ◆ Friday 23 February 2024 at Accor Stadium, Sydney; or
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\*The prize is a single concert ticket only. Competition terms and conditions apply.



# LAUNCHING PLATINUM CRUISE CLUB



## PLATINUM CRUISE CLUB BY CRUISECO

CRUISECO, Helloworld's in-house cruise division is delighted and proud to announce the launch of the Platinum Cruise Club by CruiseCO. This is reinforcing the Helloworld's group commitment to the cruise sector said Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director, Cinzia Burnes.

In a "back to the future" scenario, a selected group of significant luxury cruise sellers have joined forces to form this exclusive, by invitation only, Club bringing together experience and expertise.

The founding members of the Platinum Cruise Club by CruiseCO are Clean Cruising, Hunter Travel Group (HTG), and Phil Hoffmann Travel (PHT). As the group hits various milestones, the intent is to extend the membership opportunity & criteria to like-minded & cruise focused agents.

The group plans to create exclusive cruise and land packages, secure group allocations and join forces to sell into these as well as promote ad-hoc offers as presented by our cruise line partners. The group is focused on enhancing collaboration of cruise experts to share best practice and innovation.

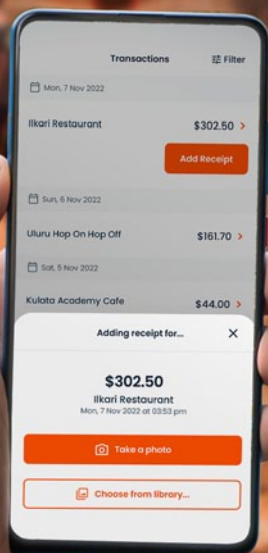
"The Platinum Cruise Club by CruiseCO is a revisited strategic approach which has been welcomed by our cruise line partners seeking to see more proactive packaging of their cruise product. We are thrilled by the positive response we have received", said Karen Deveson - General Manager Cruise for Helloworld.

On behalf of its founding members, MD and CEO of Phil Hoffmann Travel, Peter Williams, said this is just the beginning.

"The opportunity to collaborate with like-minded, cruise focused agencies backed by CruiseCO, presents a chance for everyone to win - client, cruise line, CruiseCO and the travel agent. We expect this to be a great success and are excited for what's ahead."



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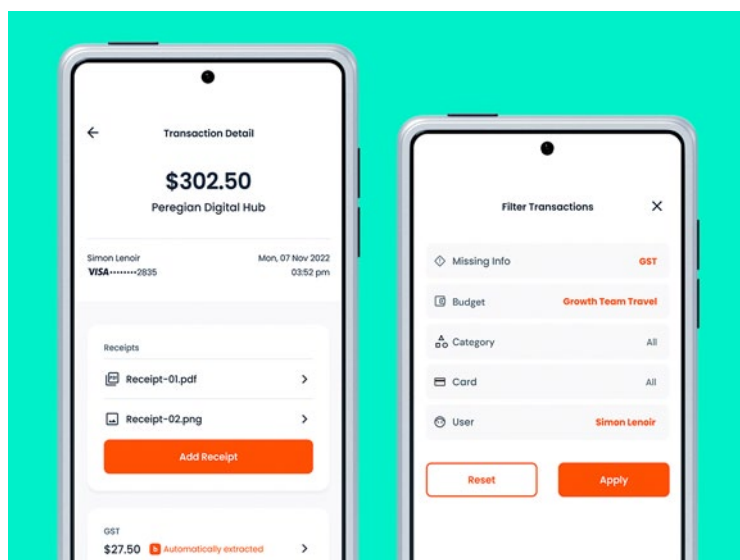


Budgetly tracks  
and categorises  
purchases as  
they happen



Automatic syncing  
of all expense data  
with accounting  
software

Travel Daily  
PRODUCT PROFILE



## Save Time on Expense Management

Budgetly is an expense management solution making waves among tour operators. With a subscription that includes a preloaded card, app, and expense software, it provides tour guides with a better way of managing their tour expenses.

Tour operators face multiple administrative challenges - from missing receipts, time-consuming expense reconciliation, and inflexible budgets, tour operators spend more time on tedious administration than planning for the actual tour.

Unfortunately, it's the reality facing most tour operators who use company credit cards and petty cash.

With its preloaded VISA cards

and receipt-capture feature on the app, Budgetly helps tour operators keep track of receipts. Its automatic reconciliation feature also ensures that administrators never have to spend hours matching receipts against company funds.

The best part? Budgetly cards can be used anywhere in the world. So being in different locations isn't a problem, as administrators can top up cards no matter where they are.

Tour operators like Oassist have been using Budgetly's preloaded cards while seeing immense benefits to their tours.

Find out more about preloaded VISA cards for Tour Operators [HERE](#).

### OASSIST SAVES TIME WITH BUDGETLY

"We definitely see the value in Budgetly for what we pay, and we have a much better process now! We run 22 holidays a year, and Budgetly has saved me at least 4 hours per trip by not having to reconcile receipts and reimburse staff if they used their own money. That's at least 100 hours a year, which is incredible."

*John Bibby, Director of Oassist.*

**budgetly**

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