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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of the latest news including our **Luxury** feature page, plus a full pages from:

- The Travel Junction
- CAPA
- A Force for Good

C360 docks in Brissy

THE first Cruise360 Australasia conference to take place in Queensland is almost upon us, with around 650 members of the Australasian cruise community to converge in Brisbane today.

CLIA MD Joel Katz said this summer is predicted to be "near-record levels" of bookings so the timing is right to recognise Brisbane as the second-busiest cruise gateway in this region.

A welcome event at the Howard Smith Wharves tonight will kick off proceedings followed tomorrow by a full-day Cruise360 conference at the Royal Int'l Convention Centre - more in **CW**.

25 wins in two months

FCTG Independent has revealed that since the start of Jul, the division has acquired an impressive 25 account wins.

The fast-growing Flight Centre branch, comprised of Travel Partners branded and affiliate agencies, Travel Associates at Home and Travel Associates Franchise, has recently inked partnerships with a range of marquee agencies including Golden Travels, Infinity Travel, Planet Dwellers (team **pictured**), and Wellness Travel.

National Sales Director of FCTG Fiona Batten said the last two months showed "the significant strides" the division has already made in the market.

"These early wins for the fiscal year exemplify our dedication to growth, innovation, and client satisfaction, and we are confident that these successes are indicative of the prosperous path that lies ahead," she said.



The recent acquisition successes follow a number of big-name appointments for FCTG Independent in recent years, as well as a meteoric rise to become one of the most valued divisions within the FCTG family, with Head of Leisure James Kavanagh revealing in Mar it was now its fourth largest division. **AB**

A Force for Good

A FORCE for Good is returning "better than ever" in Mar next year, with gatherings in Sydney and Auckland to champion diversity, equality, the empowerment of women and sustainability in travel - see **p9**.

Titan hits the road

NEWLY-LAUNCHED tour operator in Australia, Titan Travel (**TD** 30 Aug), will commence a series of roadshows around the country from 26 Sep.

The tour to educate the trade about its diverse range of "adventure made effortless" explorations will head to 14 locations including Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Canberra, Cronulla, Newcastle, Geelong, Wollongong, and Castle Hill.

The catered events will include the chance of winning a Titan Tour to Canada flying with Air Canada, as well as the opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about Titan's list of tours, touring themes on offer, and the best ways to tailor unique itineraries for clients.

Spaces are limited so interested parties are encouraged to book as soon as possible **HERE**.

Titan is a subsidiary of the UK-based Saga Travel Group and is repped locally by Ascend Travel.

New offers, new itineraries, and a brand new marketing campaign have just launched. All are designed to drive more bookings for your business. Join the next phase of *The Heart of Exploring*.

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Skroo confident on margins

EXCLUSIVE

WHILE Flight Centre CEO Graham 'Skroo' Turner concedes a new regime at Qantas may not necessarily lead to a change in agent commissions policy, he believes there will be future opportunities to improve margins through avenues like NDC.

Speaking with **TD** yesterday, Turner indicated he was "confident" Flight Centre will be able to work with Qantas' new leadership team to achieve a more viable margin over time.

"It's not going to happen overnight, I don't think the team at Qantas will change the strategy from what Alan had in place in the short-term, but we do have a pretty good relationship with the senior people at the airline," Turner said.

"The opportunity is there for a win-win, we produce more and better volumes for airlines and it's not only about remuneration, but

a cooperative working together is needed so it becomes a win-win... we have common interests and we want to produce results for both parties," he added.

Reflecting on his company's relationship with Qantas under the stewardship of former CEO Alan Joyce, Turner said that while the outcomes weren't always positive, the relationship was by-and-large very productive.

"There's always tension between agents and airlines, particularly airlines who are home carriers like Qantas, and from Flight Centre's point of view, we enjoyed a very good relationship with the senior people at Qantas - including Alan - commercially we would have liked to have done better, there's absolutely no doubt about that."

Turner also noted that moving forward, Flight Centre must show it can offer advantages for better commercial arrangements. **AB**

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AIR CANADA

GET STARTED

Beyond Scandinavia

BEYOND Travel has announced the return of its Scandinavia & Beyond range for 2023/24, with late-booking opportunities for winter adventures across Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

Packages include the nine-day Complete Iceland tour, priced from \$4,340pp; a 10-day Ultimate Lapland tour available from \$2,930pp; and a six-day Christmas in the Land of Fire & Ice, priced from \$3,330pp.

Savings of up to \$760 per couple are available - for more details on the packages, **CLICK HERE**.

Summer in the NT

THE Travel Junction is inviting travellers to "do summer differently" by booking a holiday in the Northern Territory, such as the four-night Alice Springs City Break, priced from \$1,199pp.

Agents can earn up to 15% commission - see **page seven**.



WHEN your next Qantas flight is delayed again, be thankful that the situation isn't as crappy as one that some Delta passengers found themselves in recently.

On a flight between Atlanta and Barcelona, the pilots had to request to turn back in an hour due to what one pax described as "a biohazard issue" on the plane.

As it transpired, a passenger had, according to recordings of the conversation between the pilots and Air Traffic Control, "diarrhoea all the way through the airplane".

The jet, an Airbus A350, landed safely back in Atlanta around four hours after it originally took off.

Delta didn't confirm the specific medical situation.

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 A Conversation with Martine Nunes of Oceania Cruises
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We are listening: QF

INCOMING Qantas CEO Vanessa Hudson insists the company "is listening" to customers when it comes to meeting their expectations.

In a video address to staff, Hudson said "we know that...we haven't always delivered to what our customers expect...our job is to get the balance right between looking after our customers and our people," she said.

Bali resort tragedy

A TRAGEDY has occurred at the Ayuterra Resort in Bali after five workers were killed when the cable snapped on an elevator the group was travelling on, sending the workers plummeting more than 100 metres to the ground.

An investigation has been launched into how the accident happened, with initial reports suggesting the load for the lift was too heavy and a steel cable snapped as a result.

Andre Moten departs HLO

MAGELLAN Travel and Helloworld Business Travel (HWBT) Group General Manager Andre Moten (**pictured**) will depart the business after almost three years at the helm (**TD** breaking news yesterday).

Moten will be replaced by a double appointment, with Iain Summers to take on the role of General Manager at Magellan and Kellie Stanbury promoted to General Manager of HWBT.

Reflecting on the executive changes, Helloworld noted that Moten had "been a true force to be reckoned with" during his tenure at the company, thanking the outgoing leader for his "invaluable contributions" to the company's networks.

Summers takes up his new position after previously holding senior roles at Amadeus IT Pacific, STA Travel, and Carlson Wagonlit Travel, and was also the owner/Director of I.S Consulting Group,



which specialised in operations management, IT services and management coaching.

According to his LinkedIn profile, Summers still operates a golf tourism company called Enable Golf, which organises golf tours at courses around the world.

Meanwhile, Stanbury was promoted from National Business Manager at HWBT, a role she held for 11 months before being rewarded with the GM position.

She was previously a Senior Project Manager at Corporate Travel Management and Head of Sales at Tramada Systems.

In other recruitment news, Megan Tran has been appointed Network Coordinator at HLO. **AB**

Choose more savings

AURORA Expeditions is offering US\$2,000 per person of air credit for all of its Antarctica 2023/24 voyages and A\$3,000 per person for all Arctic and global sailings departing in 2024.

Part of the ongoing Choose Your Adventure promotion, the latest offers are in addition to savings of up to 20% - more details **HERE**.

Explora's new CCO

ACHILLE Staiano has joined MSC Group's Explora Journeys as its new Chief Commercial Officer, based at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, where he will play a key role in the luxury brand's next phase of growth.

He has worked at MSC Group for nearly 30 years, most recently as Senior Vice President Global Sales at MSC Cruises.

Staiano's predecessor, Norbert Stiekema, will remain in the cruise division of MSC Group.

More luxury news on **page five**.

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Jones & Co on the go



JONES & Co is celebrating the success of its recent roadshow, which allowed the Victoria-based PR travel specialist to connect with travel agents in four cities across Australia.

The series kicked off in Perth on 17 Aug, before heading to Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney, wrapping up on 24 Aug.

Designed to showcase travel destinations in different countries around the globe, the informative

gatherings featured industry experts, engaging presentations, interactive sessions, and networking opportunities.

The roadshow events, which Jones & Co declared “an incredible success”, were made possible by its partners, which included Exo Travel, KD Tours, Greece In Style, Baltcoming, Northern Excellence, Dragonfly Africa, Iceland Travel, and Blue poppy Bhutan.

Passport scam alert

THE Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) has issued a warning to Australians about a passport-related phone scam.

People who have received a call featuring a recorded message about suspicious use of their passport are being advised by the government agency that the call is a scam, as the department would never send out generic recorded phone messages about passports to citizens.

nib Travel nabs Kelly

NIB Group has appointed Amber Kelly as the new National Head of Sales for its Travel arm in Australia and New Zealand.

Kelly will draw on her extensive background in the retail sales industry, most recently an eight-year stint at Express Travel Group, to build strong commercial relationships with key retail partners.

AC gets connected

AIR Canada has expanded its long-term partnership with Intelsat, which will see the satellite services company provide connectivity systems for nearly 100 additional aircraft across the airline’s fleet.

Intelsat’s 2Ku IFC system will be installed on the carrier’s fleet of 40 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft starting this year, while 55 aircraft used by Air Canada’s Jazz regional partner will be upgraded with Intelsat’s new ESA antenna.

VA is calling on Qld

VIRGIN Australia has released 300,000 sale fares across more than 30 routes to the Sunshine State from as low as \$49 one-way.

Part of Tourism and Events Queensland’s (TEQ) ‘Queensland is Calling’ campaign (**TD 16** Aug), the sale aims to entice travellers from interstate and New Zealand to book a holiday in Queensland.

The discounted flights are on sale now until 10 Sep **HERE**.

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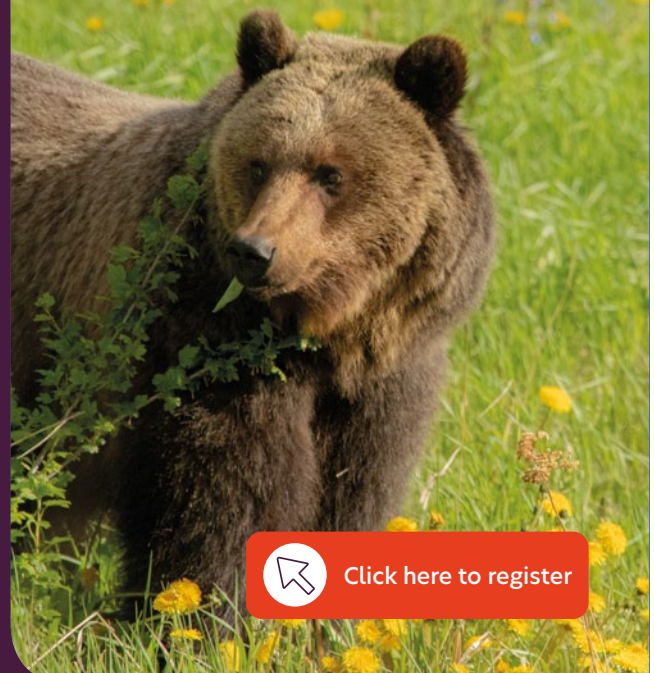
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Hotel's big tech bet

NEW research from Communications Specialist Ltd has revealed that senior executives at high-end, luxury hotels expect the sector to make more use of technology to help reduce costs and improve the overall customer experience.

Over the next five years, the report indicated that 94% of hotel managers expect hotels to make more use of virtual tours to develop a digital environment.

Around 30% of respondents also said they anticipate a "dramatic increase" in the use of VR tech, while about a third also believe QR codes will become more ubiquitous moving forward.

Further findings showed that 86% are forecasting an increase in the luxury hotel sector's use of apps available to guests to access more services (22% characterise it as a dramatic increase), and 88% expect hotels to make more use of self-checkout and technology for ordering room service and paying at the dining table or bar.

When it came to the use of artificial intelligence in the sector such as chatbot ChatGPT, 16% of respondents believe it will have "a very positive impact" on improving the overall experience of guests.

SIGNATURE KEY FOR TRAVELMANAGERS

TRAVELMANAGERS' alliance with the Signature luxury travel consortium (*TD* 03 Feb 2022) forms a key component in the group's product offering for its home-based members, according to House of Travel Australia CEO Joe Araullo and TravelManagers Chief Operating Office Grant Campbell (**pictured**).

Speaking to *TD* during the group's Christchurch conference last weekend, the pair stressed that luxury has long been part of the TravelManagers offering.

"We've always done luxury, and we still do; we just haven't made a song and dance about it," they said, adding that while rival network Virtuoso clearly has a higher profile in the local market, "we don't believe there's much difference between Signature and Virtuoso".

New TravelManagers members are able to access Signature's range of luxury hotels and value-



adds such as amenities and upgrades for the first 12 months, and thereafter opt into the program at a minimal additional fee if they feel it adds value to their business.

"They have an opportunity to trial it," Campbell said.

"If you have a few customers that use it, then it's a no-brainer... it costs next to nothing but we have this logic that if you don't put a value on it people don't use it," he added.

A number of the group's

Personal Travel Managers will attend the Signature Travel Network conference in Las Vegas this coming Nov, deepening their relationships with key suppliers as well as the wider group.

Campbell noted that while many are increasingly playing in the luxury space, the Signature offering is part of the wide array of supplier product provided to TravelManagers member agents.

"We just want to provide all sorts of products where there's a requirement from the customer," Campbell said.

He noted that "Signature is quite clear about their strategy; they will quite openly say we're not about promoting ourselves, we're about promoting the agents and providing you with the tools to promote yourself".

Araullo also noted that "another key difference is that they are a co-operative; all the profits go back to members". *BP*

Cartier completes SYD's new luxury precinct

SYDNEY Airport's new luxury precinct, SYD X, is now complete following the arrival of the Cartier boutique, which is the first to open at any Australian airport.

Spanning 170m², the boutique offers a full selection of Cartier's iconic jewellery and watch collections, plus an array of accessories including leather goods, fragrances and gifts.

The completion of SYD X, located at the T1 international terminal, comes at a time when passenger numbers are close to 90% recovered.

"After several years of planning and development it's remarkable to see our ambitious retail vision come to life with 20 of the world's best global brands under one roof," Executive GM Commercial Mark Zaouk said.

A True reef adventure

TRUE North is inviting travellers on a once-in-a-lifetime conservation expedition across the northernmost tip of the Great Barrier Reef.

Created in partnership with The Great Barrier Reef Foundation, the eight-day voyage departs 10 Dec and visits the Reef's less-explored sites - learn more **HERE**.

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Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina will undergo a multi-million dollar transformation before reopening in early 2024. The Marina Tower will be redesigned to elevate the guest experience, while the hotel's public spaces, guestrooms and suites will also be renewed, with guests to enjoy height-adjustable work tables and layered lighting in their rooms, as well as the Sheraton Sleep Experience platform bed and more.



After a £1 million refurb, **De Vere Latimer Estate**, located in the Chess Valley in Buckinghamshire in the UK, has revamped its standalone event centres. The four conference and event spaces located in The Mews have been given a refresh with new carpets, while half of its 51 bedrooms have undergone a refurbishment. Additionally, The Waterhouse now features redecorated public spaces and bedrooms, along with a revamp of its largest event space.



Grand Hotel des Bains Kempinski St. Moritz in Switzerland has completed renovations on its double rooms & suites, as well as receiving a new look for its lobby. The 224-key five-star hotel has completely transformed 30 rooms on a dedicated section of the property into 26 larger rooms. The new rooms are designed to prioritise comfort and natural lighting, with some of the double rooms boasting impressive views of the Swiss alpine.



Coinciding with its 100th anniversary, **The Boca Raton Resort** in Florida has unveiled a full property makeover. The guestrooms and suites have been redesigned to "create cohesion and luxury", while preserving the original furniture. The lobby and bar, Palm Court, and four of the resort's restaurants have all received a new aesthetic ahead of the milestone anniversary.



Slated for a spring 2024 completion, work has begun on a multi-phase renovation plan at the historic **Pfister Hotel** in Milwaukee. The property will revitalise its ballrooms and meeting space, as well as see the addition of new guestrooms in its historic tower and various enhancements to its lobby, bar and cafe. The refurbishment will also consist of new colour schemes and facilities.

Cooking up ties with Indo



WESTERN Australia Premier Roger Cook (pictured) has met with Indonesian airlines in Jakarta this week with the intention of strengthening aviation ties.

The meetings form part of the WA Government's Indonesia Connect Roadshow, which is the state's largest overseas trade mission with 130 delegates, including business, industry, media and govt representatives.

The contingent, which included WA Tourism Minister Rita Saffioti, held talks with Garuda Indonesia, AirAsia, and other carriers yesterday to discuss Perth's aviation connections with the South Asian country.

"While we currently have 60 flights travelling between Perth and Indonesia on a weekly basis,

we're always looking to further strengthen our relationship with our closest international neighbour & explore new aviation opportunities," Saffioti shared.

In pre-pandemic times, Indonesia was Western Australia's seventh largest international market with over 38,000 visitors contributing an estimated \$81 million to the Wildflower State's tourism economy.

MH370 new location

THE final resting place of missing flight MH370 may be 1,560km west of Perth, according to a new report from British aerospace engineer Richard Godfrey and academics Hannes Coetzee and Prof Simon Maskell.

The 232-page report details a new location for the ill-fated Boeing 777-200ER aircraft, based on results from emerging radio technology called Weak Signal Propagation Reporter (WSPR).

The results of the case study align with the analyses by Boeing and Inmarsat, as well as the analysis by the University of Western Australia of the plane's floating debris that was recovered from Indian Ocean islands.

EK/UA Mexico deal

EMIRATES has inked an expanded codeshare partnership with United Airlines to include another nine cities in Mexico.

These destinations include the popular tourist hub of Cancun, in addition to Cozumel, Monterrey, Puerto Vallarta, Guadalajara, San Jose Del Cabo, Leon/Guanajuato, and Queretaro.

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The Summit will feature a concurrent stream dedicated to the Corporate Travel Community that will explore key themes specific to this part of the industry and welcome corporate travel managers from across the country.

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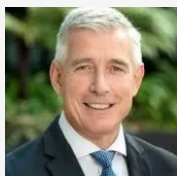


Aviation Stream



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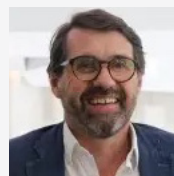
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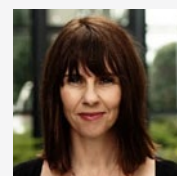
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