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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Thursday 1st Feb 2024

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See the **cover page** for the full list of benefits.

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## TTC revamps learning

TTC Tour Brands has unveiled a brand-new travel agent eLearning course covering all five of its divisions: Luxury Gold, Insight Vacations, Trafalgar, Costsaver and Contiki.

The new education push has been designed with the rigours of a travel advisor's standard day in mind, with TTC ensuring the new course is more time-efficient than previous versions by running no longer than 15 minutes each.

There are six new modules to complete in total, including a special 'Introduction to TTC Tour Brands' class to provide an

overview of the wider business.

Agents who complete the training will also be eligible to earn credits through the TTC Tour Brands 'Book Bank Bon Voyage' incentive and have access to a wider range of industry discounts.

TTC Tour Brands Managing Director, Toni Ambler, said the aim of the revamped education content was to make selling its tours simpler for both new-to-travel advisors and those with strong industry experience.

"Whether agents are looking to refresh their brand knowledge or are completely new to our brands, this new eLearning course will give them the groundwork to understand how TTC Tour Brands offer options for every taste, pace and place," Ambler explained.

"This easy-to-use platform demystifies multi-day touring, taking the complexity out of selling so that agents can convert with ease, boosting average revenue and creating high yielding, repeat clientele," she added.

TTC said it has deployed a combination of fun interactive elements and more conventional learning methods in the revamp - more details [HERE](#). AB

## Sebire covers CEO

COVER-MORE Group has appointed Chief Financial Officer Justin Sebire as its new Interim Group CEO, effective today.

The announcement follows previous Group CEO Cara Morton's move to Switzerland, where she will head up the travel insurance provider's parent company, Zurich Global Ventures.

Sebire brings more than 25 years of global leadership experience with major insurance companies to the role, and has worked in Europe, the United Kingdom, Asia and Australia.

The experienced executive is tasked with overseeing the Sydney-based travel insurer's day-to-day operations, in addition to his ongoing responsibilities as Group CFO - a role he commenced in Mar last year.

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of the latest news including **Business Events News**, a front cover page from **CVFR**, plus a full page from **A Force For Good Hub**.

## EY-JU codeshare

AUSSIES flying with Etihad can now more easily connect to 12 south east European destinations through Air Serbia's Belgrade hub, thanks to a new codeshare agreement forged by the carriers.

Some of the cities include Bucharest, Budapest, Thessaloniki, Tirana and Skopje.

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## Accor Vacation Club sold



**DEVELOPING** and expanding the Accor Vacation Club timeshare brand will be a primary objective for Travel + Leisure Co following the latter's acquisition of the Accor holiday ownership club (**TD** breaking news yesterday).

The deal, which is expected to close in Q1 this year, brings Accor Vacation Club under the umbrella formerly known as Wyndham Destinations, adding 24 resorts and 30,000 timeshare members to the Travel + Leisure Co stable.

Accor Vacation Club will continue to operate under its new ownership, with the sale price of the group listed as US\$48.4m.

The brand will join a roster of established timeshare brand affiliations including Wyndham, Sports Illustrated & Margaritaville.

In addition to further APAC growth, Travel + Leisure has its sights set on new timeshare products, with Accor receiving a percentage of vacation ownership

sales via a licensing agreement.

Upon closing, Accor Vacation Club will fall under the responsibility of Travel + Leisure Co President and Managing Director, Barry Robinson.

"Utilising our experience and the scale of our global platform, we will be able to accelerate the growth of this vacation club business by delivering outstanding vacation experiences for current and future members," Robinson said.

Accor Vacation Club resorts in Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia operate in tandem with Accor's traditional hotel brands including Peppers, MGallery, Mantra, The Sebel and more. *ML*

## ETC adds Touropa

**EVOLUTION** Travel Collective (ETC) has kicked off the year with a new addition to its client stable, with coach tour operator Touropa inking a strategic partnership.

Touropa is a joint venture between home-grown specialist Mediterranean wholesaler Sun Island Tours and Europamundo Vacations, with one of its key selling points being guaranteed departures with as few as two passengers on board.

The partnership with ETC aims to bring Touropa's extensive range of coach tours to Australian agents, along with its Rotative and Sector-based options, cutting-edge booking platform and instant confirmations.

"We see ETC as an ideal partner due to their extensive agency network connections," Touropa GM John Polyviou commented.

Touropa can be booked through ETC's Reservations team by phoning 02 9281 4537, with departures open to Mar 2025.

## Ovolo aiming small

**OVOLO** Hotels has linked with Small Luxury Hotels of the World to expand its market presence with the boutique hotel group's sales and distribution platform.

Eight Ovolo properties in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra and Hong Kong will join the SLH community, along with two 'By Ovolo Collective' hotels in Melbourne and Bali.

Ovolo Hotels CEO, Dave Baswal, said he was thrilled to join SLH.

"This strategic alliance not only strengthens our presence across key global markets while remaining independently owned and operated, but also allows us to showcase the distinct character and innovation that defines Ovolo while connecting with travellers emotionally," he said.

The addition of Ovolo to the SLH community makes it one of the larger brands to feature among the 500-strong group, with the majority of SLH hotels averaging 50 rooms or less.



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## Vale Judith Judah

THE travel industry is this week mourning the loss of Judith Judah (pictured), a well-known travel agent who forged a reputation for organising trips for some of Australia's highest flyers.

One of her most prominent clients was the late billionaire businessman Kerry Packer, as well as several high-profile executives within News Limited.

Former AFTA [now ATIA] CEO Mike Hatton heaped praise on Judah's 30-plus years of travel service, telling *Travel Daily* that she was "a woman of the upmost integrity who had major concern for every aspect of the people she looked after".



## Amadeus & beyond

**SYDNEY-BASED** travel management company Travel Beyond Group has inked a new deal to enable its staff to access the Amadeus Travel Platform.

"We are growing quickly and we need the best technology at our fingertips to support that growth and to ensure that our customers...get the value that we are best known for," Travel Beyond's CEO Tim Lane said.

## Hurtigruten links with AW

**ADVENTURE** World has teamed up with Hurtigruten Group to offer a series of journeys through Northern Europe, under the banner 'Authentic Nordics: Use our Experience to Create Yours'.

With a focus on sustainability, the new collection promises travellers "a kaleidoscope of genuine experiences set against the backdrop of majestic fjords, snow-capped peaks, charming villages, and vibrant cities".

"Our collaboration with Hurtigruten Group aligns seamlessly with our commitment to sustainability and the ethos of Travel with Purpose," Adventure World Managing Director Neil Rodgers shared.

"This partnership is a testament to our dedication to providing travellers not just a trip but a transformative experience."

Featuring Travel with Purpose experiences, the trio of new trips also includes premium



accommodation and Hurtigruten cruise expeditions.

Priced from \$12,249pp, travellers can embark on the 22-day 'Grand Nordics' adventure from Copenhagen back to Denmark, which includes a six-night Hurtigruten voyage and private guided tours.

There's also a 12-day 'Authentic Fjords of Norway' and a '15-day 'Essence of the Nordics' journey.

Travellers who make a new booking before 15 Mar will receive \$150pp of onboard credit with Hurtigruten - for more information, **CLICK HERE**. JM

## Hotel Indigo Sydney

**SYDNEY** has formally welcomed the Hotel Indigo brand to the city, with the grand opening taking place this week.

The neighbourhood-focused IHG Hotels property, owned by Pro-invest Hotels, sits behind the iconic Coca-Cola sign in Kings Cross, ideally placed for travellers eager to tap into the local scene.

The 105-room Hotel Indigo Sydney welcomes guests with a curated art collection, a theatrical NFT dance projection and vinyl turntable in the lobby.

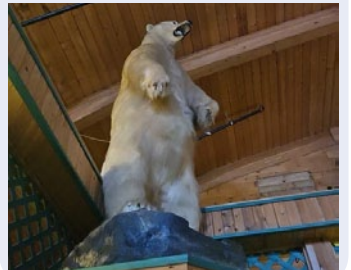


## Window Seat

IT'S one thing to advocate for saving the world's wildlife, but some similarly inclined thieves in Canada took this ideology in a weird direction by making off with a 225kg taxidermy polar bear from a Canadian holiday resort.

Local Mounties are on the hunt for the culprits, believing the brazen heist to be linked to a similar occurrence in Aug last year, when two taxidermy raccoons were pinched.

The estimated cost of these items is CAD\$35,000, with authorities asking the public to help catch the bandits.



## A Flair for trouble

**BONZA'S** sister carrier Flair Airlines has agreed on a payment plan with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to pay back the CA\$67.2 million it owes in unpaid taxes (**TD** 12 Jan).

The agreement, which relates to import duties on the 20 Boeing 737 MAX planes that make up the budget airline's fleet, comes after the CRA obtained an order in Nov for the seizure and sale of the carrier's assets "as a last resort".

## Brilliant day trips

**BRILLIANT** Travels, part of the SeaLink Travel Group, has rolled out a collection of day trips and budget-conscious short breaks on the consumer-facing portal.

In response to surging domestic demand, the new range includes a Barossa Valley food and wine experience, same-day Rottneest Island return ferry, a Whitehaven Beach day tour, and more.

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## TM lauds strong 2023

**TRAVELMANAGERS** (TM) is anticipating a year of robust growth after racking up several notable achievements in 2023, including an increase of 68% in average monthly sales compared to pre-pandemic 2019.

Chief Operating Officer, Grant Campbell, said the results showed “an accurate and extremely positive picture of TravelManagers’ position” as the business enters 2024.

Campbell also pointed out that nearly 40% of the network’s Personal Travel Managers (PTMs) exceeded the \$1 million sales mark in 2023, representing a jump of 16% on 2019, while 11% of PTMs notched up more



than \$2 million in sales in 2023, compared to 3% of sellers in ‘19.

Additionally, the premium home-based travel network recorded a 46% jump in average consumer holiday spend for 2023 versus 2019, with rising demand across multiple destinations, including a 43% increase in domestic travel and a 51% increase in international travel.

Campbell said he expects demand for cruise, luxury and multi-generational travel to deliver a continuing upward trend for TravelManagers in 2024.

“We experienced an unprecedented level of demand from supplier partners to attend our 2023 annual National Conference in Christchurch, and we’re looking forward to welcoming them back to this year’s conference in Cairns,” the COO revealed. *JM*

### FCTG careers site

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has launched its new global careers site, featuring refreshed visual design, navigation and content, and showcasing roles across all FCTG brands in more than 20 countries - see the revamped platform [HERE](#).

## EK refreshes BNE lounge



**THE** newly renovated Emirates lounge at Brisbane Airport (**pictured**) is reopening this Sat.

Offering a newer, more modern design, the lounge is furnished with Middle Eastern influences, as well as a variety of seating choices, such as chairs and sofas.

The soon-to-open lounge will cater for up to 183 guests and offer a refreshed dining area, shower facilities and a prayer room, as well as a continuation of complimentary wi-fi.

There is a wide array of food and beverage options in the revamped lounge, including a buffet of local, Middle Eastern, Asian, and European dishes, alongside classic desserts.

Emirates passengers will also be able to board their flight directly from the lounge.

The reopening follows the recent announcement Emirates

will be upgauging its second daily Brisbane service EK430/431 to an Airbus A380 from 01 Oct this year (**TD** 29 Jan). *MS*

## Topdeck gets real

**TOPDECK** is offering travellers substantial savings across its Asia and New Zealand departures for 2024/25, as part of its new ‘Real Me’ promotion.

Discounts of up to \$750 per person are available on selected trips departing between 01 Apr 2024-31 Mar 2025, including the new 28-day ‘Get Social: Big Southeast Asia’ tour, now priced from \$3,499 per person.

The savings can be combined with one of Topdeck’s Non-Stop Saving Discounts, including its 5% loyalty perk.

The Real Me promotion will run until 28 Feb.

## #TRAVELINSPO

Check out which destinations are trending [HERE](#)

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## BEA ANNOUNCES NEW CHAIR

**BUSINESS** Events Adelaide (BEA) has announced former CEO of the Australian Hotels Association (AHA) SA, Ian Horne, as the new Chairperson for its board.

Horne has been a member of the BEA Board since 2014, most recently as Deputy Chair, and is viewed by many in the industry as one of South Australia's most experienced tourism and hospitality industry advocates.

Since retiring from AHA SA in mid-2023 after an 18-year tenure, he was appointed to the Board of Tourism Australia, and is also a member of the South Australian Tourism Commission Board, the Adelaide Venue Management Corporation, and the South Australian Skills Commission.

Horne replaces Jim Kouts, who held the position since 2017, during which time he oversaw the organisation's rebrand from Adelaide Convention Bureau to



Business Events Adelaide, as well as playing a key role in securing increased gov funding last year.

"We are very fortunate to have someone of Ian's calibre ready to lead Business Events Adelaide into the future," Business Events Adelaide CEO Damien Kitto said.

"He is a highly regarded, connected and respected leader

and having worked closely with Jim in refining Business Events Adelaide's strategic vision, there is no one better placed to assume the position of Chair."

The outgoing Chair will remain on the board as an independent director, "as part of a considered governance strategy".

At the same time, BEA also revealed experienced independent director Catherine Cooper as its new Deputy Chair.

"Ian and Catherine's appointments will ensure Adelaide maintains its position as a business event destination that puts economic growth future front and centre," Kitto added.

As the organisation responsible for attracting national and international business events every year to South Australia, BEA contributes around \$250 million to the state's MICE sector, which totals more than \$2.5 billion. *JM*

### AIME program out

**THE** full events program and speaker line-up for AIME 2024 has been unveiled, with less than three weeks to go until the event kicks off.

The Knowledge Program is set to take place on the first day, 19 Feb, and will include sessions on the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge, how AI can boost events, and more.

The trade show will take place on the second and third days, along with a discussion on First Nations culture in events, team building sessions, case studies, and more - full details [HERE](#).

**MEANWHILE**, the IHG Hotels and Resorts team revealed it will have its biggest-ever presence at AIME 2024, with more hotels and countries represented than ever before.

### New Orange hub

**WORK** has begun on a new \$33.5 million cultural hub in Orange, NSW, which is expected to boost the region's performing arts scene.

Slated for completion in 2026, the Orange Regional Conservatorium and Planetarium project will include a 275-seat auditorium, a 65-seat planetarium auditorium, rehearsal spaces, and more.

### W Singapore revamps meeting spaces

**W SINGAPORE** - Sentosa Cove has unveiled its newly renovated meeting rooms and ballroom, which now boast improved features and modernised aesthetics.

The Great Room, Great Room Foyer, the four Studio Rooms, and the Strategy Room now feature upgraded furnishings, updated flooring and wallpaper, new marine colour tones, fresh decor, and more modern AV



equipment for presentations.

Delegates can make use of a new giant LED screen in The Great Room, allowing for improved customisation and live streaming capabilities.

### Edinger honoured

**CHIEF** Executive of The Events Centre Caloundra, Bronwyn Edinger, has been recognised with a Member of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2024 Australia Day Honours list.

Edinger received the honour as a reward for her services to the performing arts, and her leadership roles across the country, including at the Perth Theatre Company, where she was the joint founder.

She has also been a member of several key events bodies.

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appointments@traveldaily.com.au

Moving on from her two-year post at Crown Resorts as its Chief Brand and Corporate Affairs Officer, **Danielle Keighery** will join **Qantas** as its Chief Corporate Affairs and Communications Officer, effective from 01 Mar. Replacing the outgoing Andrew McGinnes, the well-known executive also boasts nearly two decades of experience at Virgin Australia, where she was in charge of the carrier's branding and PR.

**Natalie Freeman** has taken on the role of National Business Development Manager at **Murray River Paddlesteamers**. Freeman returns to the industry after a seven-month travel break, and is now based in Melbourne for her new role. In the past she has held similar positions at Pan Pacific Hotels Group and Crystal Cruises.

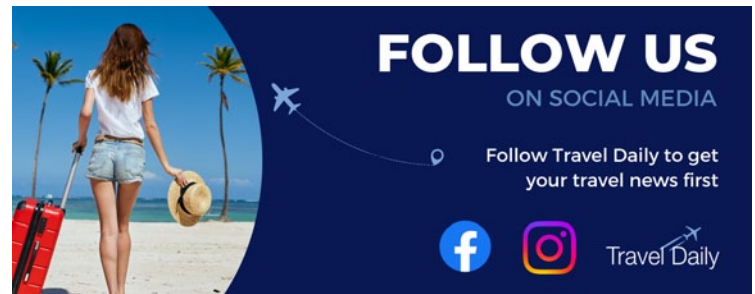
Corporate travel management company **Serko** has announced the appointment of tech entrepreneur **Sean Gourley** to its board as an Independent Non-Executive Director, effective today. Gourley is well-regarded in the technology sector with his contributions to AI companies Primer and Quid. He will draw on his experience with scaled data and AI solutions to reinforce Serko's international growth.

**Harry Sargant** has exited his post at Inside Travel Group after an 18-year tenure. From leading tours to driving the sales division, Sargant was instrumental in introducing the company's InsideJapan and InsideAsia brands to travel agents across Australia. In 2016, he moved from the UK to Brisbane to help develop the company's branch Down Under. As for the future, Sargant will continue to work alongside the travel industry, and will continue to be based in Brisbane.

**Ynot Concepts**, a boutique travel and tourism marketing agency, has welcomed **James Smith** as its new Sales and Marketing Manager. Smith brings a vast range of experience to the new role, including his time as School Partnership and Relationship Manager at Red Earth in Melbourne, and a guide in Antarctica and the Arctic for Quark Expeditions for a year in 2007.

Scotland-based **Rebecca Somes** has joined **Traveltek** as its new Head of Digital Marketing. The communications specialist joins from Border Crossing UX, where she worked for more than two years as Marketing Consultant; prior to that, Somes was the Reporting Officer for United Nations. She will report to Traveltek's Chief Commercial Officer, Cressida Sergeant, and is tasked with creating international exposure for the travel software company.

**CruiseDeals NZ** has announced the appointment **Emma Bull** to the newly created role of Cruise Product and Marketing Manager. Bull brings over 25 years of customer service and sales experience, and most recently held a similar role at GO Holidays. Bull will aid the brand's roll-out of online innovations and simpler booking services.



## WA sets a high Barr



**TOURISM** Western Australia hosted members of the industry in Sydney yesterday to showcase the state's Aboriginal tourism offering, with Channel 7's *Sunrise* host Natalie Barr (pictured centre) appearing as a special guest and ambassador.

At Hudson House in the CBD, guests were given the opportunity to network prior to the event, before hearing from about eight Indigenous tourism operators about their unique Aboriginal tour experiences.

Empowered by a sense of responsibility to protect their cultures and lands, the operators

also highlighted the importance of educating their clients.

Before the event wrapped up, Barr hosted a Q&A session to speak about WA's appeal.

Travel advisors can become experts on WA with the West Aussie All Star program **HERE**. *MW*

## Scrutiny welcomed

**INCREASED** scrutiny on Boeing will make the company "better", President and CEO Dave Calhoun has insisted to staff.

In an internal statement released yesterday, the company's chief conceded the Alaska Airlines incident (*TD* 15 Jan) "makes it absolutely clear that we have more work to", and pointed out the immediate actions being taken to strengthen Boeing's quality control.

At the same time, the aircraft manufacturer released its fourth quarter 2023 results, which showed its revenues were up 10% compared to Q4 2022.

Between Oct-Dec 2023, Boeing delivered 157 commercial planes and recorded 611 net orders, generating US\$3.4b of cash flow.

## HUGE Ferris wheel

**SOUTH** Korea will soon be home to the world's biggest spokeless Ferris wheel in the world, capable of carrying more than 1,400 people.

Named the Seoul Twin Eye due to its double ring structure, the giant ride will boast a 180-metre diameter, offering 360-degree views of the surrounding area.

The \$1.1 billion project is slated for completion in 2028.

8TH & 11TH MARCH 2024

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