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Travel advisors can win \$1,000 a day by making a deposited booking with GFOB - [cover page](#).

Joyce versus Aston

THE public battle between former Qantas chief and *Australian Financial Review* writer-turned-book author Joe Aston has been laid bare in a new wide-ranging feature from our Publisher, Damian Francis.

Aston was one of the most feared business writers in the country when he wrote for the *AFR's* Read Window column, with Joyce one of several executives to regularly earn his ire.

Aston now has a book out lambasting Joyce and Qantas - read the **TB** feature [HERE](#).

CT Partners' hits \$2b TTV

EXCLUSIVE

INDEPENDENT travel buying group CT Partners has reported a record \$2 billion total transaction value (TTV) in its latest results, as revealed to *Travel Daily*.

The business' latest TTV included \$1 billion from preferred airline production alone.

CT Partners Chief Executive Officer Matt Masson said that the business' airline income increased from \$15 million last year to \$22.9 million in FY24, while its land income rose from \$2.6 million to \$3.1 million, bringing together \$26 million in total member overrides, a 48% increase when compared with last year.

"Achieving \$2 billion in TTV and a 48% increase in member overrides underscores the power of CT Partners' approach and the strength of our supplier relationships," Masson said.

The positive results were revealed at this year's three-day CT Partners annual conference in Hoi An, Vietnam, attended by 100 delegates including major conference sponsor Singapore

Airlines, ATIA CEO Dean Long and keynote speaker, Vietnam travel expert, Mark Bowyer.

During CT Partners' AGM, Anna McMurtie from Wentworth Travel was re-elected, while FBI Travel's Mark Chaskiel will step down from the board after serving in the role for seven years.

Alongside McMurtie, the board of directors includes: Joe Araullo, TravelManagers; Peter Muller, ATPi; Fiona Prosser, Globetrotter Travel; Michael Chase-Smith, Orbit World Travel; Shane Barr, TAG; and Gary Reichenberg, Connections Travel Group.

"This year's annual general meeting celebrates 20 years of CT Partners' success, and as we look to 2025, we remain focused on further enhancing our premium travel offerings and driving value for our members," said Masson.

Air tickets incentive

AIR Tickets and Singapore Airlines are offering a bonus incentive, allowing travel advisors to earn up to \$100 per ticket - more information on [page 10](#).

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features 10 pages of news, a cover wrap from **Globus**, an update from **Silversea**, a photo page from **Helloworld** and our **Business Events News** feature, plus a full page from **Air Tickets**.

CLIA noms open

NOMINATIONS have opened for Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) Media Award, with the winners to be announced at a gala celebration in Sydney on 08 Mar.

Media from both Australia and New Zealand are invited to take part, submitting their stories, videos, podcasts, or broadcasts which showcase cruising.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further information about nominating.

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Ambler takes the lead

LONG-STANDING Travel Corporation CEO David Hosking has retired from the role today, a move that has seen Toni Ambler elevated to the position of Managing Director TTC Tour Brands Oceania effective tomorrow (**TD** breaking news).

Hosking will not be directly replaced, with TTC instead electing to restructure its management team, which will see AAT Kings CEO Ben Hall and Adventure World MD Neil Rodgers now report directly to Alastair Campbell, who has rejoined TTC as Interim CEO Specialist and Adventure Brands based in the UK.

Meanwhile, Director of Commercial Industry Relations ANZ, Scott Cleaver, will relocate



to the United States to report directly to newly installed CEO TTC Tour Brands Melissa DaSilva (**TD** 23 Sep).

In the role, Cleaver will seek to drive a global TTC Touring Brands sales project, with his previous local responsibilities to be undertaken by Ambler (**pictured**).

In accepting her new position, Ambler said the management changes will place more of a focus on its trade partnerships and strategic alignment across our Australia and New Zealand.

TTC also confirmed Uniworld MD Alice Ager will continue to report to CEO Ellen Bettridge.

The changes were made under the direction of Chairman elect Carl Leaver, who will be visiting Australia in the week commencing 11 Nov to provide an update on the future direction of the brand in the region. *AB*

Silver Nova is here

FOR the first time, travellers in Australia and New Zealand can experience Silversea's Nova-class ship, *Silver Nova*.

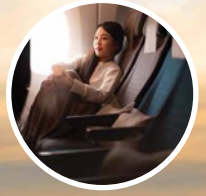
Find out more on **page seven**.

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Issue via **TravelTech**

HLO hits the small screens



HELLOWORLD has teamed up with the Nine Network to bring its travel and lifestyle program back to grace television screens around Australia.

Hosted by Eddie McGuire, Lauren Phillips, Anthony 'Lehmo' Lehmann, Giaan Rooney and Luke Nguyen, Helloworld the TV Show will showcase unique destinations around the globe.

Over the course of the season, viewers can join Rooney as she travels in WA and New Zealand, while Phillips heads to Fiji and Canada, and Nguyen explores Croatia, Japan and Vietnam.

Meanwhile, Lehmo will travel to Sri Lanka and Singapore, and McGuire will set sail out of Athens for the UK and Ireland.

"Travelling with Helloworld for this incredible show has been nothing short of life-changing," Nguyen said at the show's launch event in Melbourne.

"Helloworld has taken me to such magical destinations...that I would not have found on my own," he added.

The first episode will air on Nine on 03 Nov at 4.30pm Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth, 1pm in Sydney and 12pm in Brisbane, then running weekly until Dec.

Check out all the pics from the launch event on **page eight**. *JM*

Pictured: Rooney, HLO Chief Executive Andrew Burnes, Phillips, and McGuire.

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Envoyage blasts to Infinity and beyond

MEMBERS of Flight Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) burgeoning independent brand Envoyage can now access a wide range of FIT and custom holiday packages via a new preferred deal with Infinity Holidays (**TD** breaking news).

The preferential tie-up between the two FCTG divisions will help Envoyage agents grow their businesses through access to exclusive Infinity package deals.

Agents will also be able to get in touch with the wholesaler via a dedicated phone line.

Infinity Holidays Business Leader Jo Rendall said the partnership is centred around ensuring Envoyage members can create unforgettable holiday experiences for their clients.

"Our team of experts know the product range like the back of their hand, so it'll be a game-changer for Envoyage's independent agents to have access to such a high level of support in their



businesses," Rendall said.

"In addition to having access to our extensive product range, the co-consult support will allow advisors to be more productive, in turn giving them the opportunity to focus on other areas of their businesses and most importantly, providing exceptional service to their valued customers."

Rendall added that Infinity Holidays has also seen success working with the Envoyage network in New Zealand.

MEANWHILE, Envoyage has kicked off the first in a new series of educational events aimed at bringing its independent agent

network together to share ideas and get members involved in the brand's strategic direction.

The Amplify event series will take place quarterly and will also allow members to gather to share ideas, hear important procedural updates and network with preferred suppliers.

Envoyage General Manager Australia, Nick Queale, said the Amplify series is a direct response to feedback, with members also encouraged to submit questions on topics ahead of time.

"The Envoyage Amplify series reflects our commitment to investing in professional development," Queale said.

The first session took place this week and focused on the growing NDC fare and ticketing ecosystem.

Members were able to share feedback on the brand's NDC channel strategy, the direction of the platform, and airline integration timelines. *ML*

CTM extends UK

CORPORATE Travel Management (CTM) has been appointed by the UK Government for another three years on an exclusive basis, the company revealed in an update to the ASX this morning (**TD** breaking news).

Previously the company serviced the UK deal as part of a panel of three, however, CTM is now the sole contractor.

The latest deal also includes a one-year option from Jan 2025.

However, the positive announcement was tempered by news that the new UK Government, led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, has reduced the operational budgets for all departments, which will likely see a significant reduction in government travel spend.

Meanwhile, in further Europe-related news, CTM revealed that the company's CEO of Europe, Debbie Carling, will step down at the end of year, a role she has held since 2016.

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Qantas raids pilot

LAWYERS acting for Qantas have conducted a raid on the home of Luke Fogarty, one of its former pilots and executives who is preparing to switch to rival carrier Virgin Australia.

According to *The Nightly*, the attack followed what Qantas said were some “dodgy file uploads” allegedly stolen by Fogarty while serving his notice last month.

Fogarty had previously acted as QantasLink’s senior operations manager and played a key role in the ongoing introduction of its Airbus A220 fleet.

MEANWHILE, Qantas has begun its new direct service between Brisbane and Manila, with the first service taking off this week using an A330 aircraft.

The route will operate four times per week and complements QF’s existing daily service from Sydney to the Filipino capital.

The new service will add around 100,000 seats per year between Australia and the Philippines.

Automatic refunds go live

AIRLINES operating flights in the United States are now required to issue automatic refunds to passengers as part of dramatic reform to the sector.

Under the new policy, air travellers will be given a cash refund without having to request for one, applicable in instances where the carriers fail to fulfil base service agreements.

These include cancelled or significantly changed flights where passengers do not accept an alternative booking or compensation from the airline.

Under the changes, travellers will also be able to access a refund of checked bag fees when luggage is not delivered within 12 hours after domestic flights arrival times, and between 15 to 30 hours of international flights.

Passengers will also be compensated when ancillary services have not been provided, such as wi-fi, seat selection, and



in-flight entertainment.

US Transport Minister Pete Buttigieg said the changes were needed as travellers are entitled to the expectation of refunds without “headaches or haggling”.

“If an airline cancels or significantly changes your flight and you don’t rebook, you’re entitled to an automatic refund and if you buy in-flight wi-fi and it doesn’t work, you’re entitled to an automatic refund,” he said.

Qantas will not be immune to the new policy changes, with all carriers operating flights to US soil required to adhere to the refund rules.

The Flying Kangaroo currently operates flights between Australia and Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas-Forth Worth and New York City, and Honolulu. **AB**

Traveltek purchase



GLOBAL travel technology company Traveltek has been acquired by Juniper Group.

Traveltek said it will look to leverage Juniper’s global network and product portfolio to increase its value with industry partners.

“We are absolutely thrilled to become part of Juniper Group, and the wider Vela Software and Constellation Software family,” Traveltek CEO Mal Barritt said.

“This offers customers access to a broader array of resources and industry-leading products, and also provides an exciting and sustainable home for Traveltek, where our team will have new growth and development.”

Traveltek has been active in the local market, linking with cruise brands Avalon Waterways (**TD 23 Jul**) and Crystal Cruises (**TD 28 Aug**) to offer agents access to its reservations platform.

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Warmest thanks,

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MEL parking rates up

MELBOURNE Airport has changed its drive-up parking rates, with the 'value' option increasing from \$12 to \$14.

Terminal parking will also increase from \$49 to \$54, while the Premium option will hike from \$79 to \$84.

The changes will come into effect from next week, although those booking online will save.

The price structure change is Melbourne's first in four years.

MSC is Roman to Melbourne



MSC Cruises has released a new segment of its world cruise for next year, depart from Melbourne, offering Australians the rare chance to sail with the line without boarding an international flight.

Australians can now book the newly released segments on board *MSC Magnifica*, which will make a selection of maiden calls for the line, such as Eden, Adelaide, Penneshaw, Albany, Busselton, and Fremantle.

Magnifica will then head to the Maldives, the Seychelles, and Madagascar, before journeying along the African coastline, and arriving back in Europe.

"We're incredibly excited to welcome *MSC Magnifica* Down Under for the local cruise season and announce bookings are now open out of Melbourne, giving Aussies the chance to experience an MSC Cruises cruise direct from a domestic port," Managing Director Lisa Teiotu said.

"These new segments feature a choice of 47-, 49-, and 50-night itineraries departing Melbourne

and allow our Aussie guests to visit a range of local and global destinations all the way through to Europe without the need to jump on a flight.

"Many of our local ports of calls will be seeing an MSC Cruises ship in their waters for the first time, so this presents a great opportunity for us to showcase the unique offering of MSC Cruises in this market and the features of the wonderful *MSC Magnifica*," she added.

The world cruise will see *Magnifica* take a 120-night voyage to 46 destinations across 21 countries and five continents.

Prices start from \$11,525 per person in an interior cabin and includes a selection of shore excursions as part of the fare, a Dine & Drink Package, and a 30% discount on laundry.

MSC Voyagers Club members will also enjoy a 5% discount and triple membership points on their booking.

The world cruise commences on 04 Jan in Rome, before *Magnifica* works her way south. *MS*

Airlines in new orbit

THAI Airways and **Turkish Airlines** are upgrading their fleets with the aviation industry's first multi-orbit global network for in-flight connectivity.

SES Open Orbits offers connectivity with internet speeds up to 300mbps, available on all production airframes.

Thai will offer free wi-fi to its business and Orchard Plus guests, while Turkish's network will appear on its A350 fleet.

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Window Seat

IT TURNS out that the voice of Japan's iconic bullet train is an Aussie one, with Melbourne-born Donna Burke lending her chops to the busiest line of the nation's fast-rail network for the past 20 years.

Travellers on the Shinkansen trains between Tokyo and Japan's southern island of Kyushu are all-too familiar with hearing a distinctly Australian accent provide the English language announcements.

Burke, who was originally a school teacher and now an actor, singer, and businesswoman, scored the unique voice-acting gig after she moved to Japan in 1996.

"I had to mimic the woman before who was a Canadian trying to mimic a British woman," Burke told ABC Radio's *Nightlife*.

"So I used the same intonation but I did 'posh Aussie' and channelled my inner Cate Blanchett."

Burke says she tries to invoke a "gentle mother" when recording the announcements, which cover everything from wi-fi to suspicious baggage.

"Many businessmen...are coming back to Tokyo and we just want your voice to be like a mother's voice, gently," Burke explained.

"I've been doing it for 20 years...it's like a whole new generation is sort of grown up with me."

Remarkably, both the Shinkansen bullet trains and Burke celebrated their 60th birthdays this month.



Cheers to 15 Down Under, QR



QATAR Airways celebrated 15 years of flying to Australia with a gala dinner at Melbourne's Park Hyatt hotel on Tue (**TD** 30 Oct).

Key guests included Ali Saad Al-Hajr, Ambassador of Qatar to Australia; Abdulaziz Al-Nasr, Third Secretary of Qatar Embassy in Australia; Victoria's Minister for Tourism, Sports and Major Events, Steve Dimopoulos; and Leon Bignell, Speaker of the South Australian House of Assembly.

The event also showcased the airline's commemorative 15-year anniversary menu, featuring native Australian flavours and local ingredients (**TD** 16 Oct).

"Since our arrival, Australia

and its people have been an important focus for Qatar Airways," said Paul Starrs, Senior Vice President for International Sales at Qatar Airways.

"We've enjoyed tremendous support, working with all of the businesses and partners across all sectors, from our travel trade and commercial partners.

"Tonight is about thanking and celebrating with everyone who has helped make our 15-year journey in Australia possible and memorable - a huge thank you from myself on behalf of Qatar Airways," he added.

The Qatar flag carrier launched its Australian operation in 2009 with the Doha-Melbourne route, and has since expanded its network to include five key cities, including Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide, with 42 weekly flights. **JM**

Pictured: Cabin crew; Paul Starrs, SVP Int'l Sales at Qatar Airways; Christian Hunter, Chief Executive Officer at Travellers Choice; Ali Saad Mohamed Habab Al-Hajri, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Australia; Abdulaziz Al-Nasr, Third Secretary of Qatar Embassy in Australia; Andrew Burnes, CEO & MD of Helloworld; Justin Kestel, Regional Manager Australia & New Zealand at Qatar Airways; Greg Parker, CEO - Supply of Flight Centre Travel Group; Ram Chhabra, Group CEO CVFR Travel Group; Dennis Alysandratos, Group General Manager at Consolidated Travel; and cabin crew.

SYD traffic spikes

SYDNEY Airport reported strong Q3 performance with 10.3 million passengers, a 3.3% rise year-on-year and a 92.5% recovery on Q3 2019 levels.

The T1 international terminal saw four million passengers, up 5.8%, reaching a 95.7% recovery.

Domestic traffic increased 1.8%, with 6.3 million passengers and a 90.5% recovery rate.

Operational highlights included 100% of passengers clearing security in under 10 minutes. CEO Scott Charlton noted growth in passengers from India, the Philippines, and South Korea, adding, "we're optimistic about Chinese passenger recovery."

From next month, Paul Willis joins as Group Executive - Planning and Delivery.

Travel Daily FEATURE

Celebrating the Oceans We Explore

Ben Angell, VP&MD APAC, Norwegian Cruise Line



I'm delighted to share that NCL is once again strengthening its partnership with Take 3 for the Sea, signing on as exclusive sponsor for the **Take 3 Surf Life Saving Club Program** across Australia this summer.

Tapping into the SLSC network of 140 clubs and almost 200,000 members nationally, the program educates the surf lifesaving community about the critical issue of marine debris, as well as equipping them with resources to tackle plastic pollution.

The program, which runs from now through to March 2025, promotes environmental stewardship, community engagement, and encourages active participation in beach clean-ups to protect and preserve the country's beaches and marine ecosystems.

This new initiative reinforces NCL's philosophy of creating meaningful and effective hands-on opportunities to engage and support local communities and the environment. Our trade partners tell us this philosophy aligns well with their personal values, and with many actively involved in their local Surf Life Saving club, we can't wait to engage the travel community in support of this movement.

We look forward to sharing further details on how to get involved this summer.



NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

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First Nova-class ship in Australia

EXPERIENCE the extraordinary as *Silver Nova*, the first Nova-class ship, makes her inaugural journey through Australia and New Zealand.

This groundbreaking Silversea vessel marks a new era in luxury cruising, blending world-class sophistication with an innovative, environmentally-conscious design.

Silver Nova's asymmetrical layout and panoramic ocean views immerse guests in the breathtaking landscapes of this region, making each voyage unforgettable.

For the first time, *Silver Nova* circumnavigates the region,

allowing guests to explore the coasts of both Australia and New Zealand in unparalleled style.

From the rugged fjords of New Zealand to Australia's iconic Great Barrier Reef, this itinerary is designed to captivate, offering

a blend of pristine beaches, rich cultural encounters, and immersive shore excursions.

With all-suite accommodations and a variety of exquisite dining options, *Silver Nova* delivers a refined experience, both on

board and ashore.

Be part of this historic maiden voyage, and explore the region's most stunning destinations with the elegance and eco-consciousness that only *Silver Nova* can provide.



What's on the itinerary

SILVER Nova's journey through Australia highlights iconic destinations, from the pristine beaches of Sydney to the UNESCO-listed Great Barrier Reef.

Guests can explore Melbourne's vibrant arts scene, discover Tasmania's rugged beauty, and

witness the natural wonders of WA's Kimberley Coast.

With Silversea's signature touch of luxury and eco-conscious design, *Silver Nova* offers an exclusive, immersive adventure across Australia's vast and breathtaking landscapes.

Why sail with Silversea

SILVERSEA sets the standard in ultra-luxury cruising with personalised, all-inclusive experiences that transport guests to some of the world's most beautiful destinations.

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What truly distinguishes Silversea is its commitment

to impeccable service and immersive travel experiences.

Curated shore excursions, world-class dining, and expert-led shore excursions create a journey tailored to every guest's preferences.

Sailing with Silversea means enjoying elegance and sophistication while exploring unique, remote destinations in comfort and style.



Silver Nova

The nova way to travel

HLO toasts the return of Helloworld TV

RETURNING for a new season, Helloworld the TV show is a travel and lifestyle program created in partnership with, which will be broadcast on the Nine Network from 03 Nov.

Featuring impressive destinations around the world, each episode includes strategic advertising promotion and exclusive Helloworld travel deals.

Presenters on the show include Lauren Phillips, Anthony 'Lehmo' Lehmann, Giaan Rooney and Luke Nguyen with special host and Nine favourite, Eddie McGuire.

Commenting at the launch event in Melbourne, Eddie McGuire said, "it's been a wonderful experience and it's great to be involved in the Helloworld TV show".

"I am passionate about travel and about sharing my experiences with people so they can have the best possible travel experience."

Helloworld agents are reminded to access the weekly marketing assets for all promotion of the TV Show from the Helloworld Agent Portal.

Helloworld thanks all preferred partners who have supported the Helloworld TV show.



HLO Retail Team superstars with the stars of Helloworld the TV show.



HOST Eddie McGuire.

CECILIA Barr & Christo Niaros from HLO Oakleigh.



GIAAN Rooney, Andrew Burnes, Lauren Phillips, and Eddie McGuire.



SUSAN Curtis & Jordan McGregor from HLO Surrey Hills and Julie Lendrum & Audrie Pretty from HLO Lilydale.



JENNI Marr & Chloe Smith from HLO Vermont South with Paola Swampillai, HLO Sunbury.



LIBBY Bownas, Richard Barnes & Michelle Gonsalves from HLO Travel Parkdale.



AMY Muratovic and Rebecca Shady from HLO Rowville with Eddie McGuire and Lauren Phillips.



FIONA Coolegem, Janene Ferguson & Karen Tax from HLO South Melbourne.



ANDREW Young, TTC; Adrian Boccia, HLO; and Narelle Riley, Collette.



HAYLEY Peach, HLO Fountain Gate; Debbie Wilkie, HLO Ferntree Gully & Fountain Gate; and Olivia Love, HLO Fountain Gate.



Suncorp ticked

TICKETEK has extended its 20-year-long partnership with Suncorp Stadium, following a competitive tender process.

The tie-up means Queenslanders can continue to access tickets to sports and entertainment events using Ticketek's premium ticketing technology.

Geoff Jones, the Group CEO of TEG, Ticketek's parent company, said the company is delighted to renew its partnership with the stadium.

"Together, we look forward to setting new benchmarks in ticketing and fan engagement, ensuring that every Event at Suncorp Stadium is an unforgettable experience for all fans."

Additionally, Suncorp Stadium will continue to gain access to TEG's data insights and marketing research platform, Ovation.

Geelong gets a GM

RICK Aylett has taken on the role of General Manager of Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre, which is set to open in 2026 (TD 26 Sep).

Aylett, who has acted as Project Director for the burgeoning centre since 2022, has more than 30 years' experience in senior leadership and operations management under his belt.

The events expert said he was "honoured" to take on the role.

ADELAIDE FESTIVALS RAKE IN \$164M

ADELAIDE Festival Centre attracted attendances of more than one million in its 50th year in 2023, generating more than \$164 million for South Australia.

The impressive spend, which included food and beverage, transport, accommodation and box office, also created 64,572 visitor nights in SA.

Headline events for the iconic venue in 2023 included hosting *Mary Poppins*, one of the highest attended productions, and OzAsia Festival, DreamBIG Children's Festival, Adelaide Guitar Festival, Adelaide Cabaret Festival and Celebrating First Nations.

The first major arts centre built in Australia, Adelaide Festival Centre opened on 02 Jun 1973, with Dunstan Playhouse and Space Theatre joining the following year.

"As a leading Asia Pacific cultural centre and South Australia's



principal performing arts venue, we remain as committed as ever to supporting and co-presenting a vast array of events," said Douglas Gautier, CEO and Artistic Director of Adelaide Festival Centre.

"We believe in 'Arts for All', with the social benefits and economic impact of the arts reaching far and wide.

"The celebrations continue this year with the anniversary of our

beloved Drama Centre, including Dunstan Playhouse and Space Theatre," he added.

Adelaide Festival Centre shows no signs of slowing down this year, with OzAsia attracting a record-breaking 106,000 visitors across all of its opening events this past weekend. JM

Pictured: Hong Kong Dragon Lantern on OzAsia's Moon Lantern Trail (credit: Xplorer Media).

AV1 celebrates 20 years of operations

AUSTRALIAN event production company AV1 celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sat with an emerald and platinum-themed event at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA), one of its long-standing partner venues.

Current and former AV1 employees gathered at the MCA's new fine-dining restaurant, Canvas, for a three-course dinner overlooking Sydney Harbour.



Guests also enjoyed a private viewing of *Primavera, Young Australian Artists*, an exhibition supported by AV1.

The company produces more than 1,000 events for its clients in over 150 venues each year, and has won 14 Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) Awards.

Pan Perth refurb

PAN Pacific Perth has unveiled its newly refurbished convention floor, as part of the hotel's ongoing transformation (TD 11 Jul).

The updated space spans over 2,500m² and can cater to a wide range of events, from board meetings to large-scale galas and conferences.

The final touches, including the installation of LED screens, are scheduled to be completed early next year.



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APPOINTMENTS

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Travel technology firm **HBX Group** has bolstered its global sales teams with three key promotions. Based in Hong Kong, **Pippa Williamson** has been elevated to the role of SVP Sales Global and tasked with aligning the company's sales operations in key markets. She will be joined by **Patrick Torres** as Vice President MEAPAC Sourcing who will oversee supplier relationships. Here in Australia, **Andrew Boocock** has stepped into the role of Vice President MEAPAC Sales, which will see him charged with strengthening HBX Group's overall market position.

After a three-year stint at Qantas, **Thomas Gjerde** has taken on a role at **Air India Limited** as its new Manager Key Accounts Australia and NZ. Gjerde is highly experienced in the aviation sector, having worked in sales with Cathay Pacific, Air Canada and Qatar Airways.

Travel marketing guru **Paddy Scott** has taken his first steps as Head of Marketing with self-guided walking holiday brand **Auswalk**. Bringing over 30 years in the travel space, Scott moves to his new role from Designer Journeys and has been tasked with introducing walking adventures to a new generation of travellers.

Jessica Redford has accepted a promotion with **Royal Caribbean International**, becoming its new Head of Public Relations APAC. Redford will remain based in Sydney for her new role.

The lure of exploring the ocean has seen **Julie Golding** return to her former home at **Ponant** as Key Account Manager after one year working with Big4 Holiday Parks of Australia. Golding is highly experienced in the cruise industry, bringing nearly three years with Ponant and many years with Silversea prior to that.

As part of its participation in the Institute of Directors' 'Future Director' program, **Auckland International Airport (AIA)** has welcomed **Ngahuia Leighton** for an 18-month stint as a Future Director. Outside of her new duties at AIA, Leighton also serves as the Infrastructure Funding and Finance Commercial Manager at Crown Infrastructure Partners.

The **Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA)** has elected Outdoors WA CEO **Neil Le Febvre** as its new Chairman, replacing Christian Venues Association CEO Graeme Janes at the helm. Janes will remain on the Board with Outdoors NSW & ACT CEO Lori Modde; Outdoors Victoria CEO Andrew Knight and Outdoors Queensland Director David Hills.

Kiwi agency **Fuzion Travel** has welcomed **Angela Mills** on a contract basis to consult on strategy. The business has also taken on Melissa Bramley to help with its escorted touring division, Travelwise Holidays

Asian expedition cruise line **Pandaw** has welcomed **Toni Strachan** as its new Customer Service Manager, based at its Ho Chi Minh City headquarters. In her new role, Strachan will head up the line's reservations team and replaces James Talbot, who has left the business.

The 'Next Frontier' beckons



SPACE tourism for the mass markets may not be as far off as people think, according to a panel discussion at the Web in Travel conference in Singapore.

The 'New Frontiers In Travel: Out Of This World' panel featured Intriq Journeys Singapore founder Jess Yap & In.Genius MD, Seng Lim (**pictured**).

Topics included the progress of space tourism pioneers Virgin Galactic, Blue Origin and Space Perspective, as well as the huge investment going into developing experiences in celestial territory.

This competition was also likely to boost growth by developing different experiences and prices.

Other key findings from the panel included growing demand for adventures into space and multi-day programs, which include training protocols and weightlessness simulations.

The panel agreed Asia was an emerging market and has been slow to embrace space tourism, with less than 10% of tickets sold so far coming from Asian clients.

In.Genius founder Seng Lim put forward an alternative option as travellers can also venture to the edge of space with more gentle balloon flights which are also less intense and more affordable at US\$100,000 per person.

"Space tourism may seem like a distant concept, but this session highlighted its growing relevance, particularly in the APAC market," said Web in Travel conference founder, Siew Hoon Yeoh.

"While the current uptake in Asia is low, the potential for growth is immense," she added.

"As costs decrease and accessibility improves, we can expect to see more Asian travellers venturing beyond earth.

"This presents exciting opportunities for travel businesses in the region to innovate and cater to this new breed of adventurer."

The panel also discussed the option of parabolic flights as a way of allowing travellers to try weightlessness without actually going into space. *ML*



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