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Travel Daily AU
First with the news

Wed 01 Sep 10 Page 1

EDITORS: Bruce Piper and Guy Dundas
E-mail: info@traveldaily.com.au Ph: 1300 799 220

TMS Temp loyalty bonus

Megan Waters has been awarded \$700 this week for working 960 hours for TMS temp team.

www.tmsap.com



QF 747 explosion

A QANTAS flight from San Francisco overnight was forced to return to SFO after one of its engines "exploded" after take-off. 230 people were on board the flight, with images showing a hole ripped through the outer shell of the number four engine. The plane landed safely and a replacement engine will be fitted later this week.

ACCC OK for Stella/JTG

ACCC chairman Graeme Samuel says that the merged Jetset Travelworld and Stella Travel Group, and its member agents, "are likely to face continued and increasing competition from online travel agents, direct supply by airlines and hotels, and the largest travel retailer in Australia, Flight Centre".

In a statement confirming that the ACCC will not oppose the deal (TD breaking news), Samuel said that the commission had conducted an "extensive review of the transaction to ensure that it would not adversely affect Australian travellers."

He said that the rise of the internet had seen more and more customers look online for the best deals, meaning traditional bricks and mortar agents are forced to compete harder on price and service to attract customers.

The ACCC said it had conducted extensive inquiries with retail travel agents, wholesalers, suppliers and industry associations, and found that the deal "is unlikely to result in a substantial lessening of competition in any of the relevant markets".

Having Qantas Airways own a lesser interest in the larger retail group was also unlikely to substantially lessen competition when compared to the current interest QF holds in Jetset, the

UA fare sale

UNITED Airlines is offering return flights between Melbourne and Los Angeles from just \$905 including taxes in a fare sale which launched this morning. There are also bargain fares on other sectors such as SYD-SFO from \$1078 and Melbourne-Las Vegas from \$1081, for ticketing to 28 Nov and travel 01 Oct-30 Nov.

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Today's Travel Daily

Travel Daily today has eight pages of news and photos - including a full page from last weekend's Harvey World Travel Frontliners conference in Darwin, plus a full page of jobs from AAappointments.

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10 GOOD REASONS TO VISIT NEW CALEDONIA

3 A Gourmet Paradise

"One of the best French gourmet experiences outside of France"
Gabriel Gaté

Aircalin
International Airline of New Caledonia

CLICK HERE FOR THE OTHER 9 REASONS

Quest GDS code

QUEST Serviced Apartments will this month launch a private label chain code into travel agent GDSs for its portfolio of properties.

The accommodation provider's GM Nick Suriano says the QG code (Quest Group) will make searching for any of its more than 125 units in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji "a whole lot easier."

"Quest has the largest network of serviced apartment properties in Australasia, and we have now reached the size and footprint across this market where it makes sense to have our own GDS chain code," Suriano said.



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AOT inbound 'resilience'

AOT Group ceo Andrew Burnes says that the company's inbound business is starting to show some recovery after declining numbers in previous years.

Speaking at yesterday's Traveltech conference in Sydney, Burnes said that although total Australian inbound arrivals had increased in recent years, there had been "substitution" of leisure traffic with the education and business sectors - but AOT's

New DJ director

VIRGIN Blue this morning announced the appointment of a new non-executive director.

Sam Mostyn, who's currently the Director of the Institute for Sustainable Solutions at the University of Sydney, will join the carrier's board effective immediately, with her career also including roles at IAG, Optus and within the office of Paul Keating when he was Prime Minister.

The Virgin Blue board now includes Chairman Neil Chatfield, ceo John Borghetti and non-executive directors Mark Vaile, Rob Thomas, David Baxby and Patrick McCall as well as Mostyn.

numbers were starting to show "particular resilience for the next 12 months".

Burnes said that things are also looking up in the domestic wholesale sector, adding that while North Queensland is still under pressure "some other destinations are going gangbusters" including Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria.

The boost to Jetstar's Cairns flights (TD 25 Aug) was a "welcome shot in the arm" for the FNQ tourism industry, he said.

Burnes said that the overwhelming majority of AOT's business continued to come via the group's travel agent partners, with just 10% of TTV coming from its needitnow.com.au and travelmate.com direct websites.

And despite the advent of the internet, online booking systems and other new technology, he said that AOT still handles more than 12,000 phone calls a week from travel agents on average.

"Experiential travellers want to talk to someone. [The agents] want to craft the experience and you just can't do that with a keyboard and a screen," he said.

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Window Seat

AOT chief Andrew Burnes gave attendees at yesterday's Traveltech conference in Sydney an intriguing insight into his approach to the world of the internet, social networking, Facebook and Twitter.

"I have an old Nokia phone in my pocket, and I have a lot more time in my life as a result," he said, adding: "I don't know what the temperature is in Budapest at the moment but I don't really care".

However he did admit that he also has a new Apple iPad.

THIS wasn't part of the recent Victorian Royal Commission into the devastating Black Saturday fires last year, but apparently golf can be a major bushfire risk.

A golfer at the Shady Canyon Golf Course in Irvine, California, has been blamed for starting a 12-acre blaze after he landed a shot in the rough on Sat.

On his next swing his club reportedly snagged on a rock, which caused a spark and set the undergrowth ablaze - spreading into a wildfire which eventually required 150 firefighters to contain.

A FORMER mining town in Taiwan is developing a new niche in feline tourism, because visitors are flocking there in order to see its huge population of stray cats.

The village of Houtong is said to have twice the number of cats as humans, and is marketing itself as a "cat-lover's paradise".

Tourists visit to photograph the cats, purchase cat-related souvenirs and tickle the animals using special feather-tipped sticks.

It all started about nine years ago when one resident inherited five cats from a neighbour who had died, "and they gave birth to more and more kitties".



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Travel Daily AU

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World's Best
Business Class.
Skytrax World Airline Awards 2010

QATAR
AIRWAYS القطرية

Argentina tangos into SYD



ABOVE: Argentina Tourism held a function in Sydney last night to promote the country, with nearly 300 travel agents taking up the invitation to attend the showcase.

Eight Argentinean wholesalers and three airlines participated in the first leg of the mini travel mart, meeting with Aussie wholesalers and answering travel agent questions.

Mariano Vila, Argentina Tourism Market Coordinator for Asia Pacific & Africa said his country is filled with tourist attractions and events this year, including Argentina's new Carnival in Gualeguaychu, the World Tango Championships in Buenos Aires, along with a stage

of the Dakar World Rally, expected to lure around 5000 visitors.

Qantas, Aerolineas Argentinas and LAN were also represented, giving agents an update on their product, with QF promoting its



Premium Economy seats to Buenos Aires, priced from \$3099.

Pictured at top, *from left* are Graciela Mundielli, Argentina Tourism, Educational Tourism Coordinator and colleague with Mariano Vila.

ABOVE: Aerolineas Argentina's

Jessica Rodriguez, Oscar Cilli, Silvia Kowcz and Washington Droguett,

LEFT: LAN's Miriam Portela; Johanna Raeder, and Monica Perez.



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JNB submissions

THE International Air Services Commission will tomorrow close submissions on its draft decision to re-authorise the codeshare agreement between South African Airways and Qantas on the South Africa route.

The commission's view on the pact is likely to have changed after last week's announcement by V Australia that it was withdrawing from the route, with the initial IASC draft decision citing the increased competition due to VA as a key reason for re-authorising, as exclusively flagged in *Travel Daily* (TD Thu).

Hawaii visitors rise

THE number of Aussies heading to Hawaii has surged 13.7% year-on-year for the month of Jul, while arrivals from Jan through to Jul has also risen, up 29% over the same period last year, according to Hawaii Tourism Oceania.

World Exp buy

WORLD Expeditions has confirmed the 51% acquisition of NZ operator Adventure South, with a new brochure offering walking, trekking, heli trekking and cycling across New Zealand released last week.

AR improves OTP

AEROLINEAS Argentinas has reported a massive turnaround in the carrier's On Time Performance (OTP) compared to two years ago, when figures for flights leaving on time sat at a dismal 14-20%.

Speaking at the Argentina Tourism function in Sydney last night, regional manager Oscar Cilli said AR's on time performance was sitting at 80-85% for 2010.

Cilli also told *Travel Daily* that a new direct Sydney-Buenos Aires flight is in the pipeline for the carrier, planned to operate using one of its Airbus A340-600s.

However at this stage no start day or weekly frequency details have been released.

Cilli also said the airline has undergone big changes since being taken over by the Argentinean government from the Marans Group of Spain in 2008, including a colour change to its logo and livery (TD 09Jun), a long range fleet renovation program and a new domestic network, the New Touristic Route, which permits passengers to visit popular cities without having to pass through Buenos Aires.

MEANWHILE, for the month of Sep, AR is offering 25% commission on Business class flights to EZE.



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Voyager adds Triplt

VOYAGER Travel Corporation has adopted Triplt travel itinerary and trip planning software, which enables clients to view all aspects of their travel schedule on the web or via a smartphone.

Triplt is also able to synchronise with most calendar applications, such as Outlook and Google, allowing users to view all travel details on their main calendar.

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JAL ops overhaul

JAPAN Airlines has revealed it plans to scrap 49 routes, 10 of which are international, and retire over 100 of its aircraft as part of the airline's ongoing rehabilitation from bankruptcy.

Specific services to be cut were not named, however JAL said its "optimisation of route network" would see it focus on major cities in the United States and Europe and on Asian routes, which could mean further Australian routes are on the chopping block.

The oneworld carrier will scale back its fleet of Boeing 747-400s, Airbus A330-600s and McDonnell Douglas MD81 and MD 90 aircraft.

JAL flagged it was also mulling a low cost carrier of its own, similar to that of the Qantas Group's Jetstar operation, and culling its global workforce by 30%.

Earlier this year, JAL confirmed it was terminating its Tokyo-Brisbane route from 30 Sep, as revealed by *TD* (TD 24 Sep 2009).

QF 747 gear swap

QANTAS will be the first airline operating Boeing 747-400ER jets to take on a landing gear exchange, repair and overhaul program, the US-based aircraft manufacturer announced earlier this week.

"By choosing Boeing's landing gear exchange program, Qantas will have immediate access to a replacement gear without having to invest in a landing gear asset themselves," said Boeing's vp of material services, Dale Wilkinson.

Qantas currently has six 747-400ERs in its fleet.

Kenya fee correction

ONLY five of Kenya's 58 National Parks are applying a seasonal increase on park entry fees in 2011, not all parks as mentioned in *TD* last month (TD 12 Aug).

The changes effect Lake Nakuru and Amboseli NPs, with entry fees rising \$US15 to \$US75/day, while the fee into Tsavo East, Tsavo West and Meru National Parks will increase \$US10 to \$US60/day, in Jan, Feb, Jul, Aug, Sep and Oct.

APT Kakadu partner

APT has forged a pact with the indigenous group Djabuluku Association to create a division known as Kakadu Cultural Tours, offering experiences in Kakadu and Arnhem Land for APT's Northern Territory Short Breaks program.

Trips include an Arnhemlander Cultural & Heritage Tour and a Guluyambi Cultural Cruise.

The partnership provides jobs and training opportunities for Aboriginal people through tourism development, supporting local Aborigine communities.

The faces of distribution



YESTERDAY'S Traveltech Conference in Sydney included a panel discussion titled "Distribution - It Just Got A Whole Lot More Complicated".

The panellists, pictured above from left, were Robyn Nixon, gm Global Sales & Marketing for Intrepid Travel; Stella Travel Chief Information Officer, Peter Beveridge; Shelley Beasley, md Pacific for Travelport; and AOT Group ceo Andrew Burnes.

The discussion centred around how the internet has even further complicated the distribution of travel, in some cases introducing even more intermediaries.

Stella's Peter Beveridge said that although the internet does enable suppliers to go direct to consumers, there was still a firm place for steps in the chain which continue to add value.

He said that Stella's strategy included a push towards more automation of such areas as air ticketing, "using technology to lower distribution costs".

And he said that more and more of Stella's travel agent franchisees were understanding the strategy and aligning to it, with websites like that for Harvey World Travel

actually building the overall brand rather than pulling bookings away from agencies.

Shelley Beasley from Travelport said that the new environment had actually created more opportunities for GDS suppliers.

"It gives us more ability to get content from suppliers to consumers - the evolving world is beneficial to us," she said.

And Robyn Nixon from Intrepid highlighted the unique state of the travel industry in Australia, where Intrepid sells the vast majority of its product through industry partners, despite also having its own retail outlets and direct booking capabilities.

She said the internet had allowed Intrepid to access a much bigger customer base, with 84% of clients coming to the Intrepid website first before eventually booking via other channels.

On average globally 23% of Intrepid's bookings come via its website, but in Australia this proportion is more like 7%, she said, with the internet a key enabler for brand awareness.

See pages 2 and 7 for more stories from the Traveltech conference.

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Australian Capital Tourism is seeking a suitable candidate for its Public Relations and Media Services Unit who will positively influence national and local media to present and profile the ACT and region attractions, experiences and tourism related events to domestic target markets.

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TNZ chases Sonny

TOURISM New Zealand reportedly has ex-rugby league, turned rugby union player, Sonny Bill Williams in its sights as a new ambassador for the country's next advertising campaign.

Coco WTA acclaim

THE Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu was recently announced as the winner of the Maldives Leading Resort category at the recent World Travel Awards.

The latest recognition adds to the long list of international awards for the property.

Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu general manager Mario Stanic is pictured below with the WTA award.



Airline rebranding

CHINA'S Henan Airlines may be forced to change its name because a crash last week is impacting on the reputation of its namesake Henan Province.

Formerly known as Kunpeng Airlines (and no relation to the larger Hainan Airlines based in Haikou) the carrier was relaunched as Henan Airlines when it moved its headquarters to Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province, in Sep 09.

However after last week's E190 crash, which killed 42 people, Henan authorities say they have revoked permission to use the provincial name for the airline because the crash has "cast an extremely adverse impact" on the province.

Taronga ferries up

TARONGA Zoo will see a rise in ferry services over weekends as part of a proposed shake-up to Sydney's ferry timetable, proposed by the NSW Government.

The move will see frequencies increased between Circular Quay and Taronga Zoo to every 20 mins (up from every half-hour) on Sat and Sun, and extended hours.

Oman delays Milan

OMAN Air has pushed back the launch of its new Muscat to Milan Malpensa service by four weeks, from 01 Nov to 03 Dec, according to travel agent GDS displays.

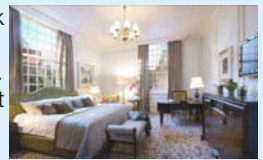
Accommodation Updates

WELCOME to *Accommodation Updates*, *Travel Daily's* Wednesday feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.

Spicers Retreats, Hotels and Lodges will open the **Spicers Balfour Hotel** in Brisbane on 20 Sep. The historic building features a contemporary European design inside, with guest rooms offering the finest Society Italian bed linens, spacious bathrooms, state of the art Bose sound systems, iPod docking stations and more.



Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces has this week unveiled its latest property, and first in South Africa, the 177-room **Taj Cape Town**. The hotel is located in the historic precinct that links St George's Mall, the Company Gardens, the Slave Lodge and the Houses of Parliament with the Groote Kerk, Grand Parade and City Hall - an area steeped in history, and known for its art, culture and cuisine.



The **Grande Bay Resort** in the US Virgin Islands on the Island of St Thomas has announced it is on schedule to open this month. The resort is furnished with Condominium style guest suites and is just a short ferry ride from St Thomas. The hotel features a swimming pool, water sports and restaurants.



AA assisting MX pax French earlybirds

AMERICAN Airlines and affiliate American Eagle are offering a 20% discount on airfares to Mexicana Airlines passengers who have been affected by the Mexican carrier's decision to cancel flights (*TD* Mon).

The US airlines say they will replace a customer's current travel itinerary with a new ticket to the original destination, or nearest airport served, between the United States and Mexico.

Tickets need to be issued by 05 Sep, with travel to be completed by 28 Oct.

MEANWHILE, Air Canada has announced it will re-introduce a direct daily Montreal-Mexico City service from 01 Nov, along with a new Vancouver-Mexico City route effective 06 Nov.

The Vancouver service will start out as a weekend offering, before moving to daily from 01 Dec.

FRENCH Travel Connection has launched six earlybird specials for the 2011 season, offering savings of up to \$900 per couple when paid in full by 31 Oct 2010.

The earlybird deals are based on cabin categories on river cruises and up to \$300 off coach tours, when deposits are received by 22 Dec.

See www.frenchtravel.com.au.

Fiji Canada no's up

VISITOR numbers travelling with Air Pacific from Canada into Fiji spiked 14% last year compared to levels in 2008, according to the carrier's North America sales manager, Coral Perry.

Perry told *TD* last week at the Vanuatu Tok Tok tradeshow that Canadian tourist numbers to Fiji and the South Pacific region in 2010 were on par with 2009 levels.

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AFTA UPDATE

the latest insights from AFTA's Chief Executive,
Jayson Westbury



Its spring! If you can believe that, and 2010 is proving to be a very interesting year for us all.

With the continued high Australian dollar, solid consumer confidence and strong conversion from intension to travel; to confirmed booking, the next few months should prove to be strong for the travel industry. Outbound travel continues to perform well in this current economic climate. All of the key drivers are looking good and continue to look good as we move into the key booking period of the next round of school holidays and of course the Christmas holiday period.

But, what is critical for this bounce to be a good bounce is stable government which can demonstrate conviction and capability. So what we need is for the independents to stop making "Wish-lists" and just make up their minds so that Australia can get on with the job of being a strong economy and country that the world sees as a beacon of stability and a place that knows how best to be successful. This will also keep consumer confidence strong.

If these meetings and list making drags on, my biggest concern will be a drop in confidence by consumers, which could create a number of problems both for the corporate market and the leisure market. Not something that we want nor need when we are on the road to getting back on our feet. We can only hope that this will all be decided and in the bag by the end of the week.

On other matters, I attended the members meeting of the National Tourism Alliance over the last two days. As you would be aware, AFTA is a significant member of the NTA and provides a balanced contribution to the ongoing efforts of the Australian Tourism Industry. A wide range of issues were discussed during the meeting including a range of reports from around the country as to the state of the Australian Tourism Industry.

Clearly, the outbound industry is doing well compared to many parts of Australia. I guess as the domestic settings move much more to a direct booking model and less to that of the travel agent, it is a time for the Australian Travel Industry to have another think about how they can better work with the retail distribution system and the enormous retail presences that travel agents provide.

The penny may be starting to sink in that "without a travel agent, THEY may just be... on their own" .



AA ramps up DFW

AMERICAN Airlines will add new nonstop services between Dallas/Fort Worth and Barbados in the Caribbean from 16 Dec.

The thrice weekly service will be operated by a 188-seat two class Boeing 757 aircraft.

Who is that masked man?



ABOVE: The Lido Group held their 2010 Res Party last Friday with a masquerade theme.

Attendees of the Party included staff from Accor, InterContinental Hotels Group, Metro Hotels, Quest, Crown Melbourne, Amora, Fraser Suites, Oaks, The Grace and many more.

The annual event is Lido's way of saying 'Thank you' to the suppliers and has been successful over the last 10 years.

Mercure appoints

MERCURE Hotel Geelong has appointed Benjamin Krieg as the properties new general manager, moving from Accor's Ibis King Street Wharf in Sydney, where he held the same role since the hotels opening in Dec 2008.

TCF new signings

THE Travel Compensation has admitted 10 new head office locations between 16-31 Aug.

New agencies in NSW include *Auswin International Tours* in Hurstville, *Big Planet Adventures* in Maroubra, *Where Next Travel* in Erina, *Lucky Leisure Travel* in Hurstville, *Luxury Bridge Holidays* in Chippendale and *Travel Plans International* in Wetherill Park.

Other new agents included *Jian Travel World* in Forrestfield WA, *Tailor Made Travelling* in Gympie QLD, *50 Degrees North* in Clifton Hill VIC, and *Travelaman* in Malvern VIC.

Flight Centre also opened three Escape Travel offices in Balmain, Ryde and Shellharbour, NSW.



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Applications close Monday 6th September 2010.



NZ resort sale

A US billionaire has purchased the upmarket New Zealand lodge of Wharekauhau for an undisclosed sum.

The country estate and farming business in the Wairarapa region is part of the Small Luxury Hotels portfolio, with upmarket clientele said to include Nicole Kidman, Bill Gates and the Rolling Stones.

The new major shareholder is William P. Foley II, who is the chairman of US insurance giant Fidelity National Financial.

Other partners in the business now include Nico De Lange and his wife Kristy, who have been managing the property for the last seven years.

Kristy De Lange previously ran Necker Island, the Caribbean resort owned by Richard Branson.

Tas convict listings

TOURISM Tasmania chief Felicia Mariani has welcomed the recent addition of five Tasmania locations to UNESCO's list of World Heritage convict sites (*TD 04 Aug*), such as Port Arthur, saying the move will "add further to our reputation as a world-class destination."

"The listing is great news for our tourism industry, and will allow us the opportunity to build an additional dimension to our visitor's experience," she said.

LCCs no problem for Travelport

TRAVELPORT md Pacific, Shelley Beasley, yesterday downplayed suggestions that GDS providers aren't able to handle the myriad of fare products offered by low cost carriers.

Speaking at the Traveltech conference, she was responding to a statement from a Jetstar executive who was quoted as saying that GDS firms weren't able to handle its content.

"We can handle their merchandising tomorrow - their seats, pillows, standing passes and even toilet passes," she said.

Beasley said the only reason there aren't more LCCs in GDS is a lack of technology standards, and individual carriers aren't willing to pay for bespoke development.

She said that Travelport and other GDS firms were also in talks with IATA to establish new merchandising standards.

"It's a very nice smokescreen for LCCs to put up, to claim that they have to sell through their own websites because the content isn't suitable for GDS".

She said that LCCs were coming into GDS all the time as they needed to expand distribution beyond their home market or offer interlining, with Travelport offering about 70 at the moment.

"Generally speaking, GDSs provide the best platform for global distribution," she said.

And although LCCs are reticent about paying GDS fees, "that doesn't change the value we deliver them," Beasley concluded.

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Due to expansion and our recent success in acquiring new business, World Travel Professionals is looking for talented individuals to join our dynamic team on the Gold Coast.

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During September, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win an incredible seven-day holiday to Hawaii, courtesy of **Hawaii Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines and Aqua Hotels and Resorts**.

This fantastic prize includes return economy airfares from Sydney to Honolulu with Hawaiian Airlines, six nights accommodation at your choice of an Aqua property in Waikiki and return transfers with a lei greeting.

Each day **Travel Daily** will ask a Hawaii-related question – just read the issue and email us your answer. At the end of the month the subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this fantastic Hawaii holiday.

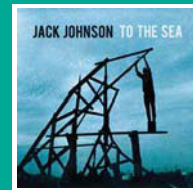


Q.1: On which Oahu beach can you kayak to the twin islands of Na and Mokulua off shore?

Email your answer to: hawaii@traveldaily.com.au

Hint! Visit www.hawaii.com.au

Plus, a daily prize of the new Jack Johnson CD - *To The Sea* (pictured to the right) will be awarded for the first correct entry received, thanks to **Universal Music Australia**.



[Click here for competition terms & conditions](#)



Website of the year

YESTERDAY'S Traveltech conference in Sydney also saw the announcement of the 'Traveltech Web Awards.'

The overall winner was hotelscombined.com, with category winners also including WebJet, Jetstar, Habitathq, Lonely Planet, Wicked Campers, P&O, Contiki and World Nomads.

Criteria included innovation, design & usability, speed and build, and content.

SQ and WA partner

SINGAPORE Airlines and the Western Australia State Government have signed a three year marketing agreement to promote the destination to potential visitors in Singapore, Germany and China.

Liz Constable, Tourism Minister said "in the year ending Mar 2010, WA recorded 75,000 visitors from Singapore - a 15% increase from the previous year" with an estimated \$195m spent.



The Unique Tourism Collection is seeking a dedicated and dynamic part-time sales representative in Sydney (4 days per month) to promote and drive sales for its international portfolio of luxury hotels, resorts and unique destinations.

The successful candidate must have a minimum of 5 years experience in the travel industry and established relationships with corporate and leisure agents, incentive houses and a knowledge of wholesalers

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- Trade shows

Please tell us why you would like to work for us and how you increase sales for our clients. Attach your CV and email to Svetlana Jovanovic on Svetlana@uniquetourism.com by Wednesday 8th September

HWT Frontliners 'Take it to the Top'

HARVEY World Travel's 2010 Frontliners Conference was held in Darwin last weekend, with 250 consultants descending on the NT capital.

Tourism NT was a major supporter of the event, with HWT md David Rivers saying: "The Northern Territory is among the most popular local destinations for Harvey World Travel customers but many of our consultants have never been here before. "The aim of the conference was to help our

frontliners improve their sales performance and customer service via product updates, incentive updates, show and tell sessions and various skills workshops."

Conference highlights included a special Mindil Markets event at the Darwin Convention Centre, which proved a big hit with the consultants who enjoyed shopping - along with the 'Outback Bling'-themed gala dinner which included awards for Harvey World Travel's top achieving suppliers and agents.

BELOW: Consultant of the Year was Julie Preston of HWT Nowra, who is pictured with HWT md David Rivers; Leanne Geraghty of Air NZ and Melissa Watt, Travel2.

RIGHT: Nick Zaferis of Hertz and Tristan Freedman from California Tourism wowed the crowd with their ABBA-solutely sensational performance.



ABOVE: Lisa Upton from Harvey World Travel Noosa won the Best Dressed award at the gala dinner. She's pictured with a cardboard cutout of Chris "Mr Big" Noth and the event drag queens - who are also pictured below doing a Priscilla Queen of the Desert number.



ABOVE: an entertainer doing what she does best at the special HWT version of the Mindil Markets.



LEFT: Northern Territory Minister of Tourism, The Hon Malarndirri McCarthy, speaking at the conference.



ABOVE: Michelle Envoy-Boyer from Harvey World Travel Alice Springs (second from the right) won the Paul Fleming Award and is pictured with David Rivers, Leanne Geraghty, Air NZ and Melissa Watt, Travel 2.



LEFT and RIGHT: These HWT consultants were very brave at the Mindil Markets event, with slithery snake boas draped around their necks.





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