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Travel Daily AU

First with the news

Fri 04 Feb 11 Page 1

EDITORS: Bruce Piper and Guy Dundas
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TripAdvisor buy

EXPEDIA offshoot TripAdvisor has purchased a California firm called EveryTrail, which has created a "GPS-enabled publishing platform to create outdoor tours and city guides for mobile devices". TripAdvisor said the technology would complement its reviews "and enrich the quality of travel information consumers can access from their smartphones".

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NTIA nominations open

THE travel industry will once again begin the process of celebrating excellence at 9am next Mon, when nominations for the 2011 National Travel Industry Awards officially open.

AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury told *TD* yesterday the Federation is once again expecting a huge response this year, after receiving a record number of nominations and votes in 2010.

Award categories are similar to last year, with the addition of a new 'Best Conference & Incentive Travel Agency' award which "has been introduced in order to recognise this important segment of travel agency operations and the specialised tasks involved in providing these services to clients."

As in previous years, suppliers will be able to nominate travel agencies and consultants in the 10 agency categories; while agents can nominate suppliers in 17 categories covering the various supplier sectors.

Nominations open at 9am next Mon 07 Feb and will close just over three weeks later, at 5pm AEDST on Mon 28 Feb.

A number of categories are judged by a panel of experts which this year includes Sharon

NBTA now Global

PEAK business travel group the National Business Travel Association has today officially been renamed as the Global Business Travel Association.

The organisation said the milestone reflects its worldwide membership base, with further changes planned to boost member benefits including "an expanded global footprint of networking and educational events".

Hannaford, Jackie Foggitt, Andrew Drysdale, Janet Sayer, Ian Wilson and Richard Doyle, who will be joining the group in place of Ron Rosalky.

The nominations are the first phase of the prestigious awards, which will culminate with the annual gala industry night of nights on Sat 09 Jul at the Sydney Westin Hotel.

Tickets for the NTIA dinner will go on sale mid-Mar.

AFTA said there's been huge interest from suppliers in the awards this year, with just two categories left for sponsorship.

Travel Daily is proud to be the official NTIA media sponsor, along with *travelBulletin*.

EY/DJ - more to come

ETIHAD Airways ceo James Hogan has referred to the Australian competition watchdog's decision to authorise its alliance with Virgin Blue for five years (*TD* yesterday) as "fantastic news".

"This is just the beginning. We hope to expand the partnership over time, providing greater benefits to travellers by growing competition and opening new routes," he added.

Hogan said the alliance will assist with growing EY's share of the Australian corporate and leisure markets and lift the Abu Dhabi-based carrier's appeal for travellers heading down under from the Middle East, Europe and the United Kingdom.

Today's Travel Daily

Travel Daily today has five pages of news and photos plus a full page promoting the AA Appointments Careers Fair.

Dalton to QH

JTG head of wholesale Simon Bernardi today announced the appointment of Fiona Dalton as its new Manager Industry Sales for Qantas Holidays and Viva! Holidays, effective 17 Feb.

Dalton has extensive experience with her most recent role being at Amex Business Travel and before that five years heading up Macquarie Bank's travel division.



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Page 2

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Sale Period 15 Jan - 4 Feb, 2011. Refer to your GDS for details

Travel2's top eleven

TRAVEL2 will next Mon launch a major 'Top 11 in 2011' sale, with "amazing deals" to the top eleven most popular international holiday destinations for Aussies, incl Bali, Thailand, Malaysia, Hawaii, Disneyland, Las Vegas, Norfolk Island, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Singapore and the UK.

The wholesaler's gm, Rohan Moss, said the deals will include free nights and exclusive bonus offers, and encouraged agents to "utilise this fantastic product to drive their own sales".

Electronic flyers will be online at www.travel2.com.au from Mon, with a 12 page brochure delivered to agents around the country from next week.

Moss said a similar promotion last year delivered Travel2's biggest booking month ever.

The special offers will be available online 24/7 on Calysponet from Mon.

Joyce warns on QF int'l

AVIATION capacity flooding into Australia from the Middle East and China has seen Qantas' international market share drop from 35% to 20%, with QF ceo Alan Joyce yesterday issuing a grim warning about the implications for the carrier.

"If we continue on our current path, there will be a real question mark over the viability of Qantas International," he said.

Speaking at a function in Melbourne, Joyce said he had set up a task force headed up by Lesley Grant "to explore options that will invigorate the business, generate new and profitable markets, and protect our jobs and assets".

He said that direct capacity into Australia grew 39% between 2003 and 2009 - but inbound passenger growth was just 10%, which he

said meant that the expanding foreign carriers "are not growing the market, but simply taking existing demand."

"In a marketplace flooded with so much capacity that our competitors aren't even using their full quota, we face severe limits to growth," he said.

MEANWHILE Joyce also announced that QF would boost its international fuel surcharges (TD breaking news), with the levy on routes to the UK and Europe up by over 50% to \$145 one way.

The new surcharge on flights to mainland USA, Canada, South America, South Africa and India will increase \$30 to \$115, while on routes to Asia, the Pacific and Honolulu the levy will be \$75.

The increases, which he said would not fully recover QF's extra fuel costs, are valid for tickets issued on or after 19 Feb.

Joyce said Jetstar would not reintroduce a fuel levy but will look at boosting fares and lifting fees such as baggage charges.

SYD slams ACCC

SYDNEY Airport has fired a preemptive shot at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission over the way the regulator compiles its reports of service monitoring at major gateways in Australia.

Sydney regularly comes last in the surveys, which airport CEO Russell Balding made negotiations with airlines more difficult.

The airport commissioned two expert reviews of the ACCC methodology, which said it had omitted details such as sample sizes and margins of error.

AOT NZ online

THE AOT Group has announced a new alliance with Tourism Exchange New Zealand (TXNZ), which will boost the online availability of AOT's NZ product.

TXNZ is used by a number of operators including Air New Zealand Holidays, with the deal giving live pricing on more than 500 NZ tourism providers marketed by the AOT Group.



Window Seat

A NEW resort development in the Maldives will be entirely staffed by young, blonde women, according to plans revealed by Lithuanian holiday operator Olialia.

Under the proposal charter flights to Male would also feature an all-blonde crew of women pilots and flight attendants.

The company's chief claimed that the resort would "liberate" blonde women.

However the plan may run into some problems, because laws in the Maldives stipulate that the resort must hire at least half of its staff locally - and there aren't very many blonde Maldivians.

SCIENTISTS in Israel have come up with a unique way to screen passengers for drugs and bombs.

They've developed a scanner which uses "specially trained mice" to detect contraband.

The rodents work in four hour shifts, and are claimed to be more accurate than sniffer dogs and X-ray machines.

Air samples from around the person being scanned are pumped into cartridges housing the mice, and when they detect drugs or explosives they run to a side chamber to trigger an alarm.

"It is as if they are smelling a cat and escaping," said one of the researchers, who claimed that in a test last year of 1000 people in a Tel Aviv shopping centre the device successfully detected 22 people carrying mock explosives.

AN Adelaide bus shelter has become a destination in its own right, after being fitted out as a mini movie theatre to promote the upcoming Adelaide International Film Festival.

The North Terrace shelter (pictured below) screens movie trailers each evening - but only to a select audience as it has just four seats.

The film festival will take place 24 Feb-06 Mar.



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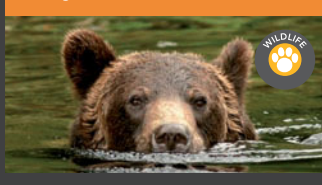
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First with the news

Fri 04 Feb 11

Page 3

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UK protection reform

BRITAIN'S minister for aviation has outlined a major overhaul of the UK travel consumer protection regime, with the aim of expanding the number of holidays which are protected.

The Air Travel Organisers' Licensing (ATOL) scheme has been the subject of consternation for some years, because of confusion about who it protects.

Currently travel suppliers in the UK who sell packages including flights must be covered under the scheme - which many say gives them a disadvantage against suppliers such as airlines which sell flights separately from land.

The government said it will undertake a consultation with the aim of extending protection to so-called 'flight plus' holidays, covering trips where the various elements are purchased within a short period of time (such as via a dynamic packaging website).

There are also moves to crack down on travel intermediaries who act only as an 'agent for the customer' meaning the clients are not covered by ATOL.

The proposed changes are estimated to protect an extra six million trips annually.

Polar evacuation

POLAR Star Expeditions has taken a "precautionary decision" to evacuate the 80 passengers on board *Polar Star* in Antarctica, as a result of hull damage sustained earlier this week (*TD* yesterday).

The initial plan for guests on the stricken vessel was to have them stay aboard as it made its way back to Ushuaia for repairs, as the damage was limited to the outer hull only.

However, the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators said *Polar Star* will now undergo temporary repairs while in Antarctica before sailing back to Ushuaia, less its paying passengers.

Affected guests, which include eight Australians, are being transported back to Ushuaia on other expedition cruise ships currently sailing in Antarctica.

The association said: "Following discussions with the captain... the company made the precautionary decision not to cross the Drake Passage with passengers aboard."

Yesterday, Intrepid Travel said it had been forced to cancel its next Antarctica expedition, which was due to sail this Sun with three Australians on board, as a result of the incident.

Sydney welcomes P&O Pearl



ABOVE: P&O Cruises' newest ship, *Pacific Pearl* yesterday made its grand entrance for the first time to Sydney Harbour following its launch in Auckland late last year.

Pearl is the first of 27 ship visits expected in Sydney over the month of Feb, and joins the debut of Seabourn's *Sojourn* expected on 05 Feb and Cunard's

Queen Elizabeth and *Queen Mary 2*, both visiting on 22 Feb.

Carnival Australia CEO, Ann Sherry welcomed the arrival of *Pacific Pearl* saying the growing popularity of cruising in Australia has seen double digit growth over the past five years.

African Roadshow

THE African Safari Co will be showcasing their product for 2011 with a series of roadshows being held across Australia in Mar.

Events are planned for Perth on 21 Mar, Adelaide on 22 Mar, Melbourne on 23 Mar, Brisbane on 28 Mar and Sydney on 29 Mar - to RSVP see africansafarico.com.au.

Air Mauritius is the 2011 airline partner for the roadshow.

Hawaii correction

HAWAII'S Australian visitor numbers increased 26% in 2010 compared to 2009, not 29% as mentioned in *TD* yesterday.

Travel Special of the Week



\$399 plus taxes to China with China Southern valid till 31 March 2011 (click)

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FULL DETAILS

Queensland mops up after Yasi

ALTHOUGH most of Tropical North Queensland escaped the wrath of Cyclone Yasi (TD yesterday), the storm has caused extensive damage to Bedarra and Dunk Island resorts, which were located right in its path.

Resort managers and staff who stayed on the evacuated islands are all accounted for and are now assessing the "necessary clean up and repair works" required.

Dunk Island Resort gm David Henry and Bedarra acting gm Sophia Ruddy said it's clear the damage is extensive and "it is still too early to determine how long the resorts will need to be closed".

MEANWHILE the Mantra Group has advised that all 12 of its Peppers, Mantra and BreakFree resorts in Cairns, Port Douglas and Palm Cove are open for business.

Peppers Blue on Blue Resort on Magnetic Island is not expected to open until the weekend, while the Peppers Coral Coast Resort in the Whitsundays was scheduled to operate yesterday afternoon after the restoration of internet, electricity and telephones in the

Airlie Beach region.

Best Western has today advised that the majority of its nine North Qld hotels are unaffected.

BW Lazy Lizard, Port Douglas; BW Reef Resort, Mackay; BW Colonial Palms and BW Mango House Resort in Airlie Beach; and BW Acacia Court, BW Central Plaza and BW Sheridan in Cairns are all open for business with no damage reported.

Telecommunications are still down at BW Cascade Motor Inn and BW Cluden Park Motor Inn, both in Townsville.

AND Daydream Island Resort and Spa says it was spared the worst of Cyclone Yasi's wrath with the initial inspection showing only debris and vegetation was needed to be cleaned up, and it will be operational for this weekend.

Tourism Queensland has advised that while Cyclone Yasi has been downgraded to a Category One it is "producing heavy rain and damaging wind gusts about the tropical interior".

Flights to Cairns, Townsville, Hamilton Island and Proserpine have resumed today.

\$5 island side trip

HAWAIIAN Airlines is offering side-trips from Honolulu to either Maui, Kauai or the Big Island from \$5, when booked in conjunction with flights ex Sydney, priced from \$976pp including taxes.

The 'Hawaii Five-0 Special' is available for travel between 18 Apr-21 Jun, 11 Jul-15 Sep & 29 Sep-30 Nov, when booked by 28 Feb.

SKAL Perth donate

SKAL Perth members have shown their support for Aussies who have suffered during recent floods and bushfires around the country, raising \$3,575 in donations.

The funds will be sent to victims of the Carnarvon floods and Lake Clifton bushfires in WA, and the Queensland and Victoria floods.

MEANWHILE, Skal Perth's next event will be held at Perth Zoo on 10 Feb, to coincide with the AGM.

A&K saves couples

ABERCROMBIE and Kent is discounting stays at Tswalu Kalahari, South Africa's largest private game reserve, with a Stay five/Pay four deal, offering up to \$4,000 off per couple.

For travel until 30 Sep five night stays are now priced from \$4,490pp, including domestic flights to and from Johannesburg, meals, activities and some drinks.

Russian additions

RUSSIA & Beyond has launched four new Special Journey trips to its 2011 brochure travelling to Russia, China and the former Soviet republics.

New options include a 17-day Russia and Capitals of the Baltics itinerary, and three-star Volga river cruises in Russia.

QR Brussels 1st

QATAR Airways completed its inaugural flight to Brussels earlier this week, making it the only Gulf-based five star airline to fly to Belgium.

The five times weekly route from Doha is the airline's 98th route and is operated using a two class Airbus A330 aircraft.



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Travel Specials*, *Travel Daily's* Friday feature. If your firm has released a travel special you'd like to make the industry aware of send the details to specials@traveldaily.com.au.

Aircalin's 'New Caledonia NOU YEAR Sale', offering up to 30% off fares from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne to Noumea, when ticketed by today. Airfare ex BNE start from \$299, SYD from \$319 and MEL from \$489 in economy class and \$1,099 from SYD and BNE in Business class. Taxes are approximately \$265. For more info call Aircalin sales support on 9299 8867.

BreakFree French Quarter in Noosa is offering a 'Refresh Stay' deal on its One and Two Bedroom Deluxe units now priced from \$189 and \$228 per night. For more details visit breakfree.com.au.

Qantas Holidays has packages starting from \$99ppts staying two nights at the Travelodge Mirambeena Resort in Darwin, as part of its Ultimate Aussie Holiday sale. The package is on sale until 28 Feb and for travel until 31 Mar 2011.

P&O Cruises has nine-night and seven-night cruise departing from Sydney onboard *Pacific Pearl* for the special price of \$899 quad share and twin occupancy. The nine night voyage takes in four South Pacific ports and departs on 10 Aug, while the seven night itinerary visits Noumea and the Isle of Pines, departing on 17 Apr.

Outrigger sales up

OUTRIGGER Hotels and Resorts says its seen an increase in hotel bookings during the first two months of the year in all of its Hawaii resorts, with the surge being put down to the freezing cold weather in North America.

The group said the Outrigger Waipouli Beach Resort, Outrigger Palms at Wailea, Outrigger Reef on the Beach are almost at capacity for the next few months.

Agent withdrawals

THE Travel Compensation Fund has voluntarily withdrawn *Value International Travel* of Caulfield North (ABN: 95 057 881 679) and *Diving Plaza* of Perth (ABN: 97 094 592 444), as the offices ceased trading as travel agents.

Destinations & Voyages Travel and *Voyages Travel Centre* in Sydney were also withdrawn after the being sold to Indigenous Land Corporation (TD 18 Oct).

WIN A MOVIE DOUBLE PASS

Congratulations to **Todd Macleod** from Consolidated Travel, who was yesterday's lucky winner.

Travel Daily has teamed up with **Coco Palm Resorts** this week and is giving readers the chance to win one of five Event Cinemas double movie passes.

Set on the beautiful Maldives, Coco Palm Resorts are fringed by white sandy beaches, dressed with luxurious tropical vegetation, and host a blue crystal clear lagoon for the enjoyment of a vast range of water sports.

For your chance to win an Event Cinemas double movie pass, simply be the first person to email the correct answer to the daily question below to : cocopalm@traveldaily.com.au.

Is there wifi in the rooms at Coco Palm Bodu Hithi?

Hint! Visit www.cocopalm.com



Indochina 2 trips

TRAVEL Indochina has added two new 'off-the-beaten-track' journeys in Bhutan and Mongolia to its Specialist Collection portfolio for discerning travellers seeking a "more exotic 'soft' adventure & cultural experience."

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Alderson appointed

CONFERENCE Call Complete Conference Solutions has appointed Julia Alderson to the newly created role of Business Development Manager, effective early Feb.

She was most recently working with HRA in the MICE sector.

BA/S7 codeshare

BRITISH Airways will kick off a new codeshare deal with Russian carrier S7 Airlines next week, with destinations including Kazan, Chelyabinsk, Ekaterinburg, Uta, Rostov, Krasnodar and Samara.

Kumuka product

KUMUKA is holding informative product and movie nights for travel agents and partners in Perth on 07 Feb, in Hobart on 09 Feb and in Adelaide on 15 Feb - RSVP at kumuka.com/rsvp.aspx.

Alitalia to China

SKYTEAM'S Italian carrier, Alitalia, will commence four times weekly services between Rome and Beijing mid this year, using triple class A330-200 aircraft.

Alitalia says frequencies on the route to its first Chinese city will be boosted to five times weekly from 01 Oct 2011.

US fares rise 10%

THE mean domestic air fares rose by 10.7% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2010, to US\$340, according to US govt statistics.

The figure was down 0.3% on the previous quarter.

The percentage of revenue that US carriers collected from airfares between Jan-Sep 2010 was 71.1%, which is around 14 percentage points lower than a decade ago.

Aspire addition

ASPIRE Apartments and Resorts has added the South Pacific Apartments in Port Macquarie to its network of properties on the east coast of Australia.

The group has other apartments on the Gold Coast, Jindabyne, Tweed Heads, Trinity Beach and North Haven.

HAL snorkel death

HOLLAND America Line has indefinitely suspended offering a snorkeling shore excursion in Belize, Central America after a female passenger died during the activity on Wed.

The 51-year old was killed when she became entangled in the propeller of the excursion boat at Goff's Caye, the *USA Today*said.

Caesars lands Kylie

CAESARS Entertainment has announced that Kylie Minogue is taking her *Aphrodite - Live 2011* World Tour to Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on 22 May, for a one-off performance - for tickets go to www.ticketmaster.com.

WIN A 5-NIGHT HOLIDAY FOR TWO AT ANANTARA PHUKET



Throughout February, *Travel Daily* is giving travel consultant readers the chance to win an indulgent Phuket holiday package for two, courtesy of **Anantara Phuket Villas** and **Strategic Airlines**.

The prize includes Strategic Airlines return business class flights for two from Brisbane or Melbourne to Phuket; five nights accommodation in a luxurious one bedroom pool villa at Anantara Phuket Villas; daily buffet breakfast and return transfers.

Anantara Phuket Villas is one of the most desirable destinations in Thailand. Each of our 83 private pool villas offer a luxurious haven of peace and tranquillity located directly on Phuket's longest beach.

Every week *Travel Daily* will ask a different question relating to either Strategic Airlines or Anantara Phuket Villas - just read the issue and email us your answer.

There will be four questions in total. 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 stunning Phuket escape.

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

Q.1: What is the launch date of Strategic Airlines' services to Phuket from Melbourne and Brisbane?



Starwood Q4 result

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts Worldwide has reported a Q4 record net income of US\$339m, up from the loss of US\$107m incurred at the same last year.

The last four months of the year also saw the hotelier add 37 hotel management and franchise contracts, representing 8,000 rooms, as well as opening 23 hotels and resorts which added an extra 5,700 rooms.

Minor appointment

MINOR International has appointed Australia's Tabatha Ramsay as its new vice president, sales for the Minor Hotel Group, based in Bangkok.

She was most recently the Area Director of Sales & Marketing for Minor's Thailand, Indonesia and Maldives properties.

US Airways #1

US AIRWAYS has been ranked in first place amongst the major network carriers and third in airline safety, according to a study by US News and World Report.

Veritas holiday relief

VERITAS Event Management is offering an online prize draw to raise money for those affected by the Queensland floods, with one lucky person winning a \$10,000 holiday for two to New York.

The goal for the Event's company is to raise \$50,000 for the Appeal with tickets for the holiday draw priced at \$10 each.

The package includes economy flights to New York, seven nights accom at the Mandarin Oriental, brekkie, private airport/hotel car transfers and two tickets to a Broadway show.

To donate and be part of the draw visit - <http://bit.ly/evP75M>.

MGM free apps

MGM Resorts International is offering 12 new applications on Google's Android system that will be accessible on Blackberry's operating systems next month.

The free apps have only been available on iTunes, but the launch of Research in Motion will now offer a broader customer range for its Las Vegas hotels.

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