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Tuesday 25th Jun 2013

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GA Altea to launch

GARUDA Indonesia has confirmed that the final transition to its new Amadeus Altea res system will start at about 9am on 29 Jun, with a formal cutover between midnight and 2am Jakarta time on 30 Jun.

GA says the new system will see a more seamless reservation process, shorter check-in times and better service.

It's also a key step in the airline's accession into SkyTeam.

Wotif dynamic packaging

WOTIF.COM is set to roll out dynamic packaging for short-haul international locations, including Asia, as part of proposals following a strategic review of the business initiated by the firm's new ceo, Scott Blume.

The review outcomes were announced yesterday, along with a profit downgrade (**TD** breaking news) which sees expectations of a \$50.5m-\$51.5m full year after tax result - down about 13% from last year's \$58m figure.

The company appears to be clearing the decks, with the profit decline including \$760,000 in accelerated write-off of IT development costs, as well as a \$1.74m charge related to the write down of selected Asia Web Direct domain names.

"Due to algorithmic changes on Google, the traffic from those lower-ranked domains has declined dramatically, and these links to the Group's booking sites also have a negative impact on overall Search Engine Optimisation rankings," Wotif said.

However, visitation to other key Asia Web Direct domains continues to increase, providing an opportunity to "monetise traffic in the future".

Blume said there was small TTV growth from the company's core Australian/NZ accommodation business, despite a "lacklustre domestic retail environment" as well as some "encouraging growth" in its flights business which includes the Lastminute and travel.com.au brands.

The company has also increased commission payable by hoteliers to 11% this year, but "these positive factors have been eroded

by a continuation of the year-on-year revenue shortfalls in Asia and Rest of World," Blume said.

The recent appointment of Olivier Dombey as Executive General Manager for Wotif's Asia operations (**TD** 14 Jun) is one of several initiatives to redress the decline "and get this business growing again".

In addition, the review proposes "monetisation of traffic from Group websites," and continuation of the recent soft launch of dynamic packaging in Australia which included 'Lion King' packages.

Blume is also targeting a significant improvement in overseas hotel content, including expanding direct contracts and "potentially working with additional third party content suppliers".

A refresh of Wotif's overall Group marketing strategy is underway, and several key projects have commenced to "expedite internal development of new website functionality and speed to market".

This includes a strong focus on the company's various mobile sites and apps "to ensure that we are well placed to meet the increased customer demand for searches from all mobile devices."

Blume said he was confident the new strategies "will well position the company for future growth"

Cuban Salsa winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Hannah Kleboe from Academy Travel who is the lucky winner of a double pass to the upcoming Cuban Salsa Congress in Sydney.

Courtesy of Air Canada, Hannah will enjoy parties, live music, workshops, performances and lots of Cuban dance during the event which takes place 05-07 Jul.

AC now offers easy connections to Cuba - for more information about the event, **CLICK HERE**.

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Tuesday 25th Jun 2013



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CZ Canton Route deals

CHINA Southern Airlines this morning released Business class special fares on its Canton Route, offering flights from \$5020 to Amsterdam, \$5100 to Paris and \$5300 to London Heathrow.

The deals are on sale from now until the end of Jul, and is part of celebrations of the arrival of CZ's first Australian A380 flight in Oct.

The A380 Business Class sale also includes flights from Australia to Los Angeles and Vancouver, starting at \$5175.

Regional tourism grants open

MATCHED funding opportunities on a dollar-for-dollar basis for amounts between \$50,000 and \$250,000 are available as part of the second round of the Tourism Industry Regional Development Fund (TIRF), which opened on Fri.

A total of \$9.6m has been allocated by the Federal government for tourism operators seeking to improve the quality of the visitor experience in regional Australia.

The latest round of funding was launched by Assistant Tourism Minister Don Farrell, who said investments made will continue to boost increasing visitor numbers to regional communities.

A total of 19 projects from Round 1 of the TIRF grants were approved for assisted funding, with a collective amount of \$4.3m provided by the government.

Successful applicants included Bungaree Station and Discovery Holiday Park in Clare, who are both embarking on upgrade projects for their accommodation offerings.

Developing shortages in skilled labour in regional areas will also

receive a boost through the new program, with \$2.1 million allocated to support worker development and retention programs.

Applications for Round 2 grants will close on 07 Aug, with those deemed successful to be announced in Oct.

For more details on the scheme, see www.ret.gov.au/tirfgrants.

FAA electronics delay

THE US FAA has extended the deadline for the handing down of final recommendations regarding the use of in-flight electronic gadgets such as laptops, iPads and smartphones until Sep.

A 28-member advisory panel is examining the issue, with a draft report cited last Fri by the *Wall Street Journal* flagging the possible easing of at least some of the current restrictions.

The report is not finalised, but indications are that laptops, tablets and e-books may be used throughout the flight while further investigations will be undertaken into mobile phones.

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Air NZ confirms 787 routes

AIR New Zealand's 787-9 aircraft are expected to be configured with around 300 seats in total when the carrier receives the first of the new planes in the middle of next year.

CEO Christopher Luxon this morning revealed that long-haul routes for the aircraft will include Shanghai and Tokyo, while the new fleet will also be deployed to Perth, Papeete and Honolulu.

Luxon said the new planes were a significant growth opportunity for the carrier, opening up the prospect of "expanding our Pacific Rim footprint".

The revelations also confirm that the NZ 787-9s will have Business Premier, Premium Economy, and Economy cabins, including 16 rows of the 'Skycouch' seating which convert to a "sofa-like flat surface".

Air NZ is the launch customer for the stretched version of the 787, and Luxon said the aircraft would replace its 767 fleet and enable a consistent product offering on all long-haul flights - including the availability of the Skycouch on Asia flights for the first time.

Interestingly, the premium economy cabin on the 787-9s won't feature NZ's 'SpaceSeat', with the carrier instead selecting "a customised seat best described as Business-lite" with a 104cm pitch, a 13cm wide armrest and extendable foot support "which will allow passengers to really stretch out".

QH garden show

QANTAS Holidays is offering package deals to the upcoming inaugural Australian Garden Show Sydney, which will take place 05-08 Sep at Centennial Park.

Overnight packages start from \$108pp and include one night's accom plus an entry ticket.

Customers who quote 'Bonus' can also receive 2000 extra Qantas frequent flyer points with every Sydney event air & land package booked this month - more info on 13 27 87.

Luxperience China link

LUXPERIENCE has announced a new partnership with the China Luxury Travel Network, which will see select luxury travel buyers from China attend the event.

CLTN is a high-end B2C and B2B invitation-only leisure travel network which is operated by the VariArts Travel Group in China.

Luxperience ceo Helen Logas said the Chinese market is increasingly important for many exhibitors at the show, which takes place at the Sydney Overseas Passenger Terminal in Sep this year.

See www.luxperience.com.au.

TI agent incentive

TRAVEL Indochina has launched a new rewards program offering a range of seven incentives to travel agents depending on their levels of bookings.

The "It's your turn to experience Asia" promotion is valid for eligible new FIT bookings from now until 15 Sep, with rewards able to be redeemed for the booking agent plus a companion.

Examples include booking 10 passengers on any Victoria Cruises Yangtze River cruise and receiving one free cabin on any four or five day Victoria cruise; or book 10 passengers on a Shanghai or Beijing city stay and receive a four-star stay in the same city.

MEANWHILE, the operator has also released its new 2013-15 Asian River Cruising brochure, with 64 pages and 13 new itineraries across the Mekong, Yangtze, Ayeyarwady and Chindwin Rivers and trips ranging from 4-22 days.

More info on 1300 362 777.



Window Seat

GOLF tour organisers usually head for iconic courses such as Pebble Beach in California or St Andrews in Scotland.

However, it's being suggested that they consider running trips to Iceland, which has been judged as one of the "most golf-obsessed places on earth".

The country has a total population of about 320,000 and a whopping 65 golf courses - one for every 5000 residents.

Some of the top places to play are pretty hard to pronounce, with important courses including Vestmannaeyja and Þorlákshafnar, says *stuff.co.nz*.

Although the season only runs for about four months each year, there are a number of advantages, including the ability during the long days of midsummer to play almost around the clock.

A US man has attempted to emulate Danny Deckchair, ending up high in a tree after flying 24 miles in a lawn chair suspended from a large bunch of helium balloons.

Sixty years young Joe Barbera took off on Sat morning from his home in Washington State, hoping to land "somewhere in Oregon," about 250 miles away but some defective balloons brought him down early.

Unfortunately he wasn't able to document the exploits - before the launch he had to dump his camera - in order to reduce weight to manage to get off the ground.

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A quarter century in the game



ABOVE: Qantaslink FNQ area manager Matt Trevett-Lyall recently surprised Escape Travel Townsville owner Debbie Giudes with a special commemorative plaque marking momentous 25 years in the travel industry.

QH cricket packages

QANTAS Holidays has launched ticket and accommodation deals for the upcoming Ashes cricket series between Australia & England in Australia this summer. Packages start from \$662 per person twin share, with games to be played in Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne and Sydney, beginning from 21 Nov.

The final Ashes test will take place in early Jan 2014 at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

AA boosts MH c'share

AMERICAN Airlines has expanded its codeshare pact with Malaysia Airlines, with the AA code now on MH flights from Kuala Lumpur to Bangkok, Langkawi, Penang and Singapore.

Long runs for novices

FALLS Creek has opened Australia's longest ski run aimed at beginners, with the new course entitled Wombats Ramble.

The run is a 2.2km green grade run for novice skiers, stretching from the Cloud 9 area to the bottom of the Falls Express lifts.

Inspire Me app by EK

EMIRATES has launched a new 'Inspire Me' travel app on its website aimed at showcasing the offerings of destinations serviced by EK to passengers wishing to travel but unsure where to go.

The app features technology developed by Travelport & offers a graphical map of the world with inspired search functions helping travellers to choose a destination.

Oaks EOFY specials

OAKS Hotels & Resorts has launched an End-of-Financial-Year sale with a range of special offers valid for its Australian properties.

Rates for the group's new Oaks on William hotel in Melbourne start from \$139 per night, with deals available in SA, Qld and NZ.

Pre/Post stay extends

A SPECIAL offer allowing one free night accommodation prior to or following a journey on South Africa's Blue Train (**TD** 03 Jun) has been expanded and extended for new bookings in 2013 and 2014, subject to availability.

Starwood has joined the party, allowing booked train guests to stay at either the Sheraton Pretoria or the Westin Cape Town at either end of the journey.



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3rd PRIZE: 2 return Economy tickets to Asia*

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SQ finalises VS sale

DELTA Air Lines is now the owner of a 49% stake in Virgin Atlantic Airways, after the finalisation of the sale by Singapore Airlines which was announced last year (**TD** 11 Dec).

DL paid US\$360 million in cash for the VS shareholding.

SIA has confirmed that existing arrangements with VS, including codesharing, reciprocal frequent flyer schemes and lounge access, will remain in place.

MEANWHILE, Virgin Atlantic says the acquisition by Delta is the next step towards a full joint venture, with a codeshare agreement launching across 108 routes to 66 destinations in North America and the UK.

The pact sees DL customers gain an additional six daily New York-London frequencies, and includes reciprocal frequent flyer benefits, and recognition of top tier loyalty program members.

DL president Ed Bastian said the deal was a "strategic investment that enhances Delta's network with greatly improved access to London Heathrow".

QF famil winners

QANTAS has announced the ten lucky agents who have won a spot on its upcoming 'Arabian Days and London Nights' mega famil departing 10 Oct 2013.

The winners are Amy Kwok, New Century Holidays; Jodie Dunbar, Pinpoint Travel; Chris Cheyne, Goldman Travel; Ashleigh Wrench, CTM; Sylvia Speranza, BCD Travel; Marian Burbury, Andrew Jones Travel; Shaun Matheson, Corporate Traveller; Dale Hall, Jetset Hurstville; Rachel Pettitt of Travelworld Newcastle; and Soni Bhat, Bay Travel.

Mongolia special

MIAT Mongolian Airlines is offering bargain return flights from Australia to Ulan Baatar (ULN), leading in at just \$1100 + taxes of about \$430 from SYD/MEL/BNE/ADL/PER/CNS.

Business class seats on the same route is available from \$4900+taxes, with the HKG-ULN sector operating using a new 767-300ER every Mon/Fri in Jul and then every Mon from Aug.

For more info, ph 1300 304 939.



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Sales Executives wanted!

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Blue Train welcomes Aussie agents



SOUTH Africa's famous Blue Train journey from Cape Town to Pretoria was among the highlights enjoyed by a group of Aussie agents on a recent Dragonfly Africa famil in Southern Africa.

The group visited a Dragonfly sponsored school in Zambia, flew over Victoria Falls in a helicopter, & enjoyed the incredible cooking skills of the Master Chef at the Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town.

Pictured above prior to boarding the Blue Train from left

are Milva Grispo Lopes, Dragonfly Africa; Lynelle Groom, Directions Travel WA; Nadine Jones, Dragonfly Africa and Fiona Caffery from Travelsense Vic.



Rd 15 Winner

CONGRATULATIONS

Mandy Rogut

from *Travel Partners*

Mandy is the top point scorer for Round 15 of *Travel Daily's* NRL industry footy tipping competition, and has won a \$50 voucher to spend on any products at www.lifeliveitup.com.au, courtesy of Life®.



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Telephone and postal applications will not be entertained.

Where could you be tomorrow?

AA Seaborne c/share

CARIBBEAN carrier Seaborne Airlines has signed a codeshare deal with American Airlines for an AA code to appear on six direct routes from San Juan, Puerto Rico.



AFTA UPDATE
The latest updates from AFTA's Chief Executive, Jayson Westbury

SO THERE we have it ladies and gentlemen, the 43rd Parliament is now just days away from its end. The first full term of our first female Prime Minister and a parliament that has had more drama and controversy than a long running prime time soap opera. For many, the end of this parliament will be a breath of fresh air as a great number of the sitting members have been embroiled in all sorts of drama themselves. And given the polls, it would also appear that many sitting members will be looking for a new job come September 15. I am typing this week's column from Parliament House and the mood in this place is captivating.

Today, (Tuesday 25th June) we had the Prime Minister of Australia sitting knitting a gift for the pending arrival of the newest member of the British Royal Family, which no matter what your flavour of politics, is a little different not to mention the swirling speculation about a change to the leadership of the Labor Party.

Whatever happens this week, the next three days will be entertaining and the next 80-odd days as we head into full election mode will be a good quality replacement for the TV given that The Voice has finished and Celebrity Apprentice is coming to an end.

Honestly, as someone that works in this environment every day, even I can't quite believe the state of affairs. I have had my international travel colleagues making comments and asking questions which means that all of this drama is playing out on the international stage and this is not good for the country. So as we plunge into Election 2013, lets hope that Aussies keep wanting to take a break or a holiday if for no other reason than to get away from the madness that is Federal Politics.



Tammy always has time for TIME



CARNIVAL Australia senior vice president Tammy Marshall was the special guest speaker

at the Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) induction function last week.

The event was held at the Vibe Goulburn Street Hotel in the Sydney CBD, appropriately to celebrate the recent signing of Toga Hotels as the new Gold Sponsor of the TIME program.

Marshall is pictured above centre at the function with TIME committee members Sue Graham of Jetset Travelworld and Penny Spencer of Spencer Travel.

WIN A SIX SENSES STAY

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Luxperience is Australasia's and the Pacific's key travel trade event dedicated to showcasing luxury and experiential travel experiences from all over the world.

This week *Travel Daily* is giving readers the chance to win three nights for 2 people at Six Senses Yao Noi Thailand in a Hideaway Pool Villa with daily buffet breakfast valued at \$2000.

To win, answer correctly four questions featured in *Travel Daily* from Monday to Thursday this week, plus answer the final question featured on Friday.

Email your answers by COB on Fri to: lux@traveldaily.com.au.

Q.2: What is the name of the dedicated buyer category available to Australia based agents to register for Luxperience?

Hint! Visit luxperience.com.au

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Noosa on tramsides

TOURISM Noosa has launched a new sales campaign in the Melbourne CBD entitled "You Could Be Here", which will see a city tram emblazoned in colourful messages promoting the region.

WA cultural getaway

ACCOR hotels are gearing up for an influx of travellers visiting Perth following the increase of flights to the state by Singapore Airlines, Qatar Airways and most recently, Philippine Airlines.

The WA capital was also recently voted in first place in Expedia's Hottest Destinations travel survey, with the hotel releasing a special Cultural Getaway deal to coincide.

Priced from \$129 per room per night, guests can enjoy a night in one of five Accor properties in the city, daily breakfast and late checkout, with tickets to a Van Gogh art exhibit at the Art Gallery of WA, valid for stays to 03 Dec.

For more details or to book, visit www.accorhotels.com.au.

Novotel dolphin offer

ACCOR'S Novotel Pacific Bay Coffs Harbour has released a new family offer including overnight accom in a 1-bedroom spa suite and a family pass to the Dolphin Marine Magic Park.

Valid for stays to 31 Aug, the package is priced from \$199pn for up to 2A2C - ph 1300 363 360.

Aussies seeking thrill

ONLINE flight searches to adventure destinations in Africa, Asia and South America are on the rise, according to a survey from Cheapflights.com.au.

African holiday queries are up 40% over the last three years, with upcoming major events in South America sending searches up 10% for the same period.

Zimbabwe back flying

IATA has advised it has carried out a safety audit on Zimbabwean national airline Air Zimbabwe and permitted it to resume flights to intercontinental destinations.

The carrier was grounded last year due to safety concerns, pilot strikes and mounting debts, which even saw authorities in London and Johannesburg seize the carrier's planes.

During the grounding, pax were being routed through DXB & JNB.

Regional and domestic flights are now set to resume, operated by Embraer jets, with two leased Airbus A380s to operate long haul services into Europe from Nov.

Air Zimbabwe said it has signed an aircraft maintenance deal with the Air France/KLM Group.

Street dancing. More fun in the Philippines

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Europcar expansion

STRONG growth of Europcar in South America has led the company to expand its operations in the continent, opening three new depots in Asuncion, Paraguay. The group said it is also planning to boost its presence with new locations in Bolivia, Singapore, South Korea & Vietnam in 2013.

APT China 2014 launch

SEVEN itineraries ranging in duration from 13-29 days feature in the newly launched Luxury Yangtze River Cruise brochure for 2014 from APT. Among the new inclusions for the season is a 29-day *Best of Vietnam, Cambodia & China* tour. Itineraries will be operated by *The Sanctuary Yangzi Explorer*, which offers 62 balcony suites, with free flights on offer for a 19-day *China Explorer* and 23-day *Yunnan and Yangtze* tour from Kunming to Shanghai for bookings made by 31 Oct.

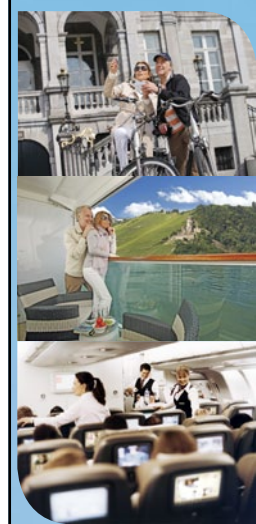
Gold Counsellors hit Abu Dhabi



ONE hundred Gold members of the Travel Counsellors global agent network travelled to Abu Dhabi recently to enjoy some of the fruits of their efforts. As part of their exclusive Gold Weekend in the UAE capital, the group were hosted in palatial luxury at the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr hotel and took part in a variety of exciting rewards.

has earned \$131,000 or more in commissions over a preceding 12-month period as of either May or Nov each year. **Pictured** above relaxing in Abu Dhabi from left are Travel Counsellors Christine Jenkins, Michelle and Mehmet Tavli and Country Manager Tracy Parkinson.

WIN A SCENIC TOURS EUROPE RIVER CRUISE



Throughout June, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win an all-inclusive luxury river cruise for two valued at over \$20,000, courtesy of **Scenic Tours** and **Swiss International Air Lines**. The prize includes two return economy class fares (ex major capital city) on Swiss International Air Lines and a Category E cabin on the 15 Days Jewels of Europe River Cruise (Amsterdam to Budapest) valid for travel in March, October or November 2014. Every day **Travel Daily** will ask a different question – just read the issue and email us your answer. There will be 19 questions in total, which will also be posted on our website. 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 all-inclusive luxury.

Email your answers to: scenictourscomp@traveldaily.com.au.

Q.16: List one Scenic FreeChoice experience available in Vienna on the 15 Day Jewels of Europe River Cruise program.



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These included a visit to Yas Waterworld, Ferrari World and a tour of the Yas Marina Formula One Grand Prix circuit facilities. Fifteen agents attending the annual weekend who had attained Gold status for the first time were formally recognised at a gala awards ceremony where they were presented with a prize celebrating the well earned status. A Gold status agent is one who

Singapore air quality

RECENT fires in Sumatra are wreaking havoc with air quality in Singapore and southern Malaysia, forcing DFAT to issue an advice bulletin on its Smartraveller page for the two countries concerning very high pollution readings. It warns Australians in Singapore to monitor updates provided on the Singapore Govt website and to seek individual medical advice if necessary. The warning level for Singapore has not changed from “Exercise normal safety precautions”.

Fuji on Heritage List

JAPAN'S iconic Mt Fuji has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, with 25 pilgrimage routes, sites, lodges, lakes and other landmarks in the area now protected from development. Named during UNESCO's World Heritage meeting in Phnom Penh, other additions to the list include China's Tianshan Mountains and Honghe Hani rice terraces and the Hill Forts of Rajasthan in India.

Bali room rates to rise

AN increase of US\$0.20 per litre for premium fuel in Bali, which took effect last Sat, is expected to push room rates higher by as much as 15%, according to the Bali chapter of the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association. Transportation groups in the nation are also predicting jumps in the cost of taxis and other modes of transportation will be passed on to consumers, however it is not currently clear how this will be implemented.

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Are you an experienced retail travel consultant in need of better work life balance? Are you tired of a low base salary? Get your weekends back & a salary you deserve! As a retail travel consultant you will enjoy dealing with a wide range of clientele from budget to high-end. Enjoy working for a well respected, boutique travel agency that has a large number of repeat clientele, located in the CBD close to public transport. Say good-bye to long working hours and HELLO to your weekends! Min 2 yrs retail experience required.

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Are you an experienced travel consultant looking to take the next step in your career? This is a great opportunity for a strong retail consultant to make the move to corporate, or for an existing corporate consultant to make the move to a well respected Global TMC. As a Multi-skilled Corporate Travel Consultant, working across high profile accounts you will enjoy working in a friendly team with supportive management. Enjoy a top salary pkg to \$65K+, Mon – Fri only. Min 2 years travel industry experience required.

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MELBOURNE (INNER) - SALARY PACKAGE TO \$70K (OTE)

Are you currently working in a retail travel consulting role where you manage a number of group bookings? Move across to a behind the scenes role in group travel coordination. This is a Monday to Friday role where you will earn top dollar constructing and managing a variety of group bookings including the likes of wedding parties, school groups and sporting groups. Don’t delay, now is the time to secure a new role prior to the EOFY rush! Salary potential in excess of \$70,000.

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PRODUCT / HELP DESK COORDINATOR

MELBOURNE (INNER) – SALARY PACKAGE TO \$58K (DOE)

Don’t delay any longer, move across to a travel specialist in a back office administrative role where you will be responsible for product loading, ensuring products on the website are up to date and correct, together with assisting staff with any product related enquiry. To be successful for this great role, you must have website content and product loading experience together with strong computer skills and impeccable attention to detail. Sensational salary on offer to the successful travel professional.

ACCOUNTS ROLE

TRAVEL ACCOUNTS COORDINATOR

ADELAIDE – SALARY PACKAGE DEP ON EXPERIENCE

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SECURE A ROLE CLOSE TO HOME

RETAIL TRAVEL CONSULTANT

PERTH (STH OF RIVER)

SALARY PACKAGE TO \$60K (OTE)

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CRUISE WHOLESALE TRAVEL CONSULTANT

BRISBANE CBD – SALARY \$50K OTE

Don’t delay any longer, become a cruise specialist today and join one of Australia’s most successful in-house wholesalers. Work in a friendly, yet busy office servicing retail travel agents via phone and email. Whether it is a South Pacific P&O cruise or round the world voyage on the QE2, you will love all things cruise! Working Monday to Friday hours with occasional weekends you’ll earn great \$\$, enjoy free cruises and discounted travel. All you need is 12 months travel consulting. Apply today and start enjoying work!

MAKE THE MOVE TO PRODUCT

PRODUCT CONSULTANT

BRISBANE CBD – UP TO \$49K PKG

Want to work behind the scenes? Interested in product roles but finding it hard to get your foot in the door? Here’s your chance! This established independent travel company in Brisbane CBD are looking for a product coordinator to join their great team. You’ll love the challenge of liaising with suppliers, assisting product managers, loading contracts and rates plus more. If you have wholesale travel or product experience and are IT savvy this is for you. Apply today and jump into product today!