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Crown Resorts to Vegas

JAMES Packer's Crown Resorts Limited is making a move into the US arena, creating a new business venture with former president & coo of the iconic Wynn Las Vegas, Andrew Pascal.

Financially backed by Oaktree Capital Management, the alliance has acquired the site of the former New Frontier on Las Vegas Boulevard - the location of the venture's first project.

Crown Resorts has a majority-share in the partnerships, with Packer the group's co-chairman.

Total costs incurred by Crown so far in the venture, including the purchase of the 34.6 acre New Frontier parcel are approximately US\$280 million.

Around eight years ago, Packer had proposed to build one of the world's tallest buildings on The Strip, dubbed Las Vegas Tower, with former US partner Chris

Milam, before the project was cancelled in 2011.

"As we have built Crown Resorts into a thriving international company with successful casino ventures in Australia, Macau and London, we've always kept our eye on Las Vegas," Packer said.

"And while we fell short in past attempts to enter that market, we now have the ideal opportunity - with a great local partner...a leading financial investor...and the perfect piece of property."

Development plans are still under wraps, but Crown said it expects to break ground towards the end of 2015 and open the new project three years later.

Second Atura planned

AMALGAMATED Holdings Ltd has today revealed the Rydges Albury will be repositioned under the group's urban, industrial and art inspired hotel brand, Atura.

The property will undergo an extensive refit ahead of the name-change to the "edgy, high-value, design inspired" Atura brand in late 2014, joining sister hotel Atura Blacktown in the group.

Today's issue of TD
Travel Daily today has nine pages of news & photos, plus full pages from:

- AA Appointments jobs
- Travel Trade Recruitment

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QR up MAD frequency

THREE new weekly services between Doha and Madrid will be introduced by Qatar Airways, effective 16 Nov.


The increase will see QR jack up its total weekly frequencies from daily to 10 weekly, adding more than 2,000 seats per week.

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Qantas swings into golf

QANTAS Frequent Flyer has unveiled plans for a new Qantas Golf Club program, backed by Greg Norman, linking to golf packages in Australian & abroad.

The online community provides members with the ability to earn Qantas Points for playing golf, the ability to book tee times over the internet, invitations to attend Qantas Golf Club events and tournaments, and is free to join

under the basic structure.

CEO Qantas Loyalty Lesley Grant said the program was expected to be a hit with members as a new means to accrue points.

"Qantas Golf Club gives Qantas Frequent Flyers the opportunity to join this one club but access many courses, as well as a range of other golfing activities," she said this morning.

Golf Australia ceo Stephen Rice said "We see real potential for this program to have a positive effect on participating golf clubs through increased foot traffic, rounds played, club marketing & future membership opportunities

QF Golf Club is set to debut in summer - qantasgolfclub.com.au.


Red Gum Motive sale

WEST Australia resources firm turned travel entity Red Gum today announced the signing of the Share Sale Agreement to acquire 100% of the issued capital of Perth based Motive Travel.

The Australian Travel Group will also be comprised of Holiday Planet and Asia Escapes, and is currently preparing a Notice of Meeting for an Extraordinary General Shareholders Meeting, a Prospectus and capital raising.

Celebrity interview



TODAY weatherman, actor, writer, director and Vanuatu Tourism Ambassador Steven Jacobs sat down for a chat with **TD** recently - see **page nine**.



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Dronie comp winner

CONGRATS to Jenny Thomson from Seniors Holiday Travel who was the winner in last week's Tourism New Zealand mini-comp.

Jenny has won a Winter Warmer Pack that includes a NZ merino scarf, NZ merino beanie, NZ hot water bottle and more.



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Australia opens up E-Visas

CITIZENS of a further 66 countries and territories globally have today been granted access to electronic lodgment of online visitor visa applications.

A phased global rollout will take the total number of countries eligible for the process to 190.

The program expansion applies to the Subclass 600 (Visitor) visa, aimed at arrivals for business or VFR purposes for up to three, six or twelve months.

Countries eligible for the e-visa program now include Philippines, New Zealand, South Africa, Bosnia & Herzegovina and more to be progressively introduced.

“This is part of a significant advancement for both Australia and its visitors, because it means that we’re even more competitive and can boast more efficient and streamlined visa processing,” Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Senator Michaelia Cash commented.

Applications can now be made by anybody from an approved country with internet access, with more details on the expansion available at www.immi.gov.au.

Senator Cash said it was vital that visa integrity was maintained, which was why the expanded online lodgment program was being rolled out in phases.

“It’s about allowing streamlined access while maintaining all the necessary safeguards and checks.”

NT to start the race

THE Northern Territory will act as the starting location in the opening episode of *The Amazing Race* on Channel 7 at 9pm tonight.

Participating teams will begin their race around the world from Kings Canyon, Uluru, with the new series coinciding with the launch of the NT Government’s “Do The NT” marketing campaign in the eastern states.

Ebola concerns for EK

EMIRATES has suspended its services to Conakry in Guinea until further notice due to the outbreak of the Ebola virus.

Services to Dakar, Senegal have also been scaled back, with the Dubai-based carrier saying the health and safety of its passengers and crew was its highest priority and would not be compromised.

AZ tie-up to close Fri

ITALIAN Transport Minister Maurizio Lupi has said Alitalia is expected to reach closure on its 49% tie-up deal with Etihad Airways by Fri of this week.

On this date, shareholders will vote on a proposed capital increase of up to €300 million, which will cover any losses made by the struggling carrier until the EY stake purchase is completed.

Etihad is expected to pay up to €1.25 billion over the next four years to secure its investment in the Italian flag carrier.



Window Seat

ANYBODY who has ever griped about sitting next to overweight pax on a plane will be thankful they weren’t on this flight.

Doing the rounds online is the photo (below) of 29 Japanese sumo wrestlers tightly packing into a turboprop aircraft on their way to a training camp on the island of Okinoshima.

After landing in the Shimane Prefecture, the group lumbered out of the plane and on to a similarly packed bus.

The group’s Twitter account

saw the humour in the situation, jokingly labelling their trip as cramped.



Quest King William South – opens 4th August

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Rd 19 Results

CONGRATULATIONS

Brett Hill

from Virgin Australia

Brett is the top point scorer for Round 19 of *Travel Daily's* AFL industry footy tipping competition and has won a Breakfast Cruise for two, courtesy of **Captain Cook Cruises**.



Major Prize Sponsors

1st Prize: two return flights to Dubai, courtesy of Emirates



2nd Prize: 5-night holiday to Vanuatu, courtesy of Air Vanuatu & Hideaway Island Resort



Kumamoto in Autumn

JAPAN Holidays has a 10-night Kumamoto Autumn Leaves & Last Samuri tour departing on 03 Nov which takes in the heritage, culture, cuisine & landscapes of the region, priced from \$4,500ppts. See www.japanholidays.com.au.

SATC close HK office

AFTER a 10 year presence, the South Australia Tourism Commission has confirmed the closure of its Hong Kong office effective 31 Oct, after a "change in structure".

GM destination development & int'l marketing Nick Jones said Hong Kong remains an "important market", attracting 9,000 visitors to South Australia annually.

"The change in structure will enable more resourcing to be dedicated toward campaign activity to grow numbers from the market which will ultimately assist industry in the Hong Kong market," Jones said.

He said the SATC would continue to be active in Hong Kong, and will work in hand with Tourism Australia, key airline and trade partners on co-operative marketing activities from Nov, managed from the organisation's Adelaide and China offices.

MEANWHILE, the SATC has appointed Stacey Cant as regional manager for New Zealand, taking over from Jane Wilson who will be staying in the tourism industry.

Plaza Prem at LHR T2

AIRPORT lounge provider Plaza Premium Lounge has launched its first venture in Europe after unveiling a facility at the new London Heathrow Terminal 2.

The lounge offers five shower rooms, five private relaxation rooms, a Wellness spa and more, and is priced at £38pp for 2 hours.

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Jetstar boss turns trolley-dolly

PASSENGERS aboard Jetstar flights JQ502 and JQ507 between Melbourne and Sydney chipped in more than \$1,000 to support StarKids Day celebrations on Fri. Jetstar Australia & New Zealand ceo David Hall donned the cabin

crew orange jacket and turned barista, assisting staff on the flight by handing out free tea and coffee to travellers on the flights.

The low-cost carrier has been supporting StarKids for seven years - a charitable partnership that raises funds for World Vision projects benefitting children in underprivileged communities across Australia and Asia.

Hall (**pictured**) will match the contribution from passengers dollar for dollar.

WA investment key

TOURISM & Transport Forum acting chief Trent Zimmerman has applauded a renewed cooperative marketing deal between Tourism WA and China Southern (**TD** Fri).

Zimmerman said the three year \$4.8 million agreement will help to build the state's brand in this "critical source market."

"These activities are essential to ensure WA and Australia capture a healthy share of this burgeoning market and help the tourism industry to fulfil its potential as an economic development strategy for Australia," he said.

SQ Formula 1 festival

SINGAPORE Airlines will host the first ever *Light Up The Night* Carnival in Singapore on Sat 16 Aug as part of the 2014 Singapore Airlines Singapore Grand Prix.

The free of charge event will "make highlights of the F1 experience accessible to the general public."

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SIA/VA fam circles SE Asia



SINGAPORE Airlines & partner Virgin Australia recently rewarded 13 West Australian agents with a circle trip fam to Singapore and Phuket.

The unique fam gave agents a chance to experience Singapore Airlines' flights from Perth to Singapore, SilkAir to Phuket and Virgin Australia back to Perth.

Accommodation was provided by Complete Travel Marketing & Anantara Hotels & Resorts, with the agents enjoying two nights in the Lion City, staying at The Grand Park Hotel Clarke Quay, Grand Park City Hall and Grand Park Orchard Road, and three in Phuket at the Diamond Cliff Resort near Patong and the recently opened Anantara Layan Resort.

Highlights included a visit to the Singapore Flyer and Gardens by the Bay by SIA Holidays.

Pictured at La Flora, Patong for afternoon canapes & drinks from left are Thanchanok Pramkull, La Flora, Patong; Amy Horne, Flight Centre Mandurah; Cassie Perry,

Helloworld NW Karratha; Olivia Moore, FC Yanche; Jodee Sorrell, Globetrotter; Hyemin Cho, Ready to Go; Jodie O'Callaghan, Elite Travel Solutions; Alante Kreis, FC Cottesloe; Wendy Sweetman, Travelworld Albany; Rachel Forbes, FC Midland; Michelle Maher, Stodarts; Flo Bennett, HWT Port Hedland; Laura Kennedy, FC Armadale; Julie Taylor, Virgin Australia; Courtney Barnes, FC Karrinyup; Samantha Swinbourne, Singapore Airlines; Wisuth Hemmakoth and Krikbodins Sinsap, La Flora Patong.

Peninsula Paris opens

AFTER a four-year restoration project, The Peninsula Paris has opened to guests, marking the debut of the brand into Europe.

Positioned at 19 Avenue Kleber, the property is home to 200 rooms & suites, six restaurants & bars, the Peninsula Spa and a rooftop terrace which affords 360 degree views overlooking Paris.

Product Loaders - 6 Month Roles

Pinpoint Travel Group is one of Australia's leading independent wholesalers. We provide travel services through our brands Freestyle Holidays, The Collection by Freestyle Holidays, Rosie Holidays and United Vacations.

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Your ability to read and interpret contracts with a strong attention to detail is critical as is time management, communication skills and an excellent command of English grammar. Previous Calypso experience is essential.

Please forward a cover letter and resume in confidence to andrew.hutchinson@au.pinpoint.biz by Wednesday, 13 August.

Submission deadline

INTERESTED parties have until this Wed 06 Aug to make submissions for the proposed \$703 million sale of Wotif.com by rival Expedia.

Submissions need to be sent to mergers@acc.gov.au with the title 'Expedia-Wotif acquisition proposal', to the attention of Gabrielle Ford/Natashca Cox/Sam Campbell.

CCC Fiji extension

CAPTAIN Cook Cruises Fiji has extended its Kids Eat, Play and Cruise Free deal on select three, four & seven night cruises until 31 Oct, valid for travel between 01 Nov and 31 Mar.

Cruises are aboard the small ship Reef Endeavour.

To avail the deal, quote the reference of 'KIDFREE3' when making a booking - 1300 TO FIJI.

Cathay 777s to SYD

CATHAY Pacific is set to launch Boeing 777-300ER aircraft on the Hong Kong-Sydney route from 03 Dec, initially operating as thrice weekly before moving to a daily operation from 01 Feb.

The 777 will function as flights CX139 from Hong Kong and the return service CX138 - one pair of Cathay's current four daily flights between the city pairs.

The first wave will boost weekly capacity by 580 seats, increasing to 1,370 during Feb.

Regional gm SWP Nelson Chin said CX is responding to "very solid demand" in Australia & SYD.

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Sanctions claim scalp

ECONOMIC sanctions imposed by the European Union on Russia over the MH17 incident in Ukraine will see the country's flag carrier Aeroflot ground operations of its low-cost subsidiary Dobrolet.

From today, the wholly-owned Aeroflot offshoot will cease all ticket sales and flights after European insurance policies were annulled due to the sanctions.

Further, all counterparties of the carrier have stopped providing maintenance services, forcing the carrier into temporary suspension.

The financial sanctions imposed effectively prohibit all entities affiliated with the European Union from doing business with the fledgling Russian startup.

Dobrolet was launched in Oct & currently operates three aircraft to domestic destinations and to the disputed port of Simferopol in the Crimean Peninsula.

Aeroflot said affected passengers will be refunded, or in the case of those travelling to Simferopol or Volgograd, will be switched to fly with Orenburg Airlines, another of Aeroflot's 100% subsidiaries.

Scenic Africa 2015

SCENIC Tours has today rolled out its new 2015 Africa program, with one of the notable changes being the inclusion of all internal flights into a tour price.

Next year's program features itineraries that traverse South Africa, Zambia, Kenya, Namibia, Botswana and Tanzania.

There are 17 touring options to choose from, including a 25 day Connoisseur's Choice by Scenic Tours offering from Cape Town to Jordan on 07 and 21 Aug which features two nights aboard Rovos Rail and is \$21,475ppts.

Extensions are also available on the Blue Train, to Sun City and Zanzibar or there is a five-day Rwanda Gorilla Trek Experience from Nairobi which is priced from \$2,995 in low season.

Scenic will showcase product highlights on the Nine Network's *Getaway* travel program on Sat 09, 16 and 23 Aug.

Emirates to Abuja

EMIRATES has added its 26th destination in Africa with Abuja in Nigeria becoming the Dubai-based carrier's second destination in the country and 144th globally.

Flights are operated on a daily basis to the Nigerian capital using three-class Airbus A340-300s.

EK also flies to Lagos, Nigeria.

Far East into Europe

FAR East Hospitality has bought a 50% interest in a portfolio of four properties in Germany and Denmark, expanding the group's ownership footprint into Europe.

The properties all operated under the umbrella brand of Adina Apartment Hotels by Toga Far East Hotels and are located in Frankfurt Neue Oper, Berlin Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin Hauptbahnhof and Copenhagen.

16 new jets for Iberia

INTERNATIONAL Airlines Grp ceo Willie Walsh has announced an order with Airbus for eight A350-900s and eight A330-200s for Spanish carrier, Iberia.

The decision was made by Walsh on Fri after revealing IB's restructuring "continues to have a positive impact" on the business, reporting a €16 million operating profit for the second quarter, compared to a loss of €35 million the year prior.

Walsh also revealed a deal has been signed "that could lead to an additional reduction of up to 1,427 jobs", creating "new opportunities" for the carrier to enhance its profitability further in coming years.

The 16 new Airbus jets will join Iberia's longhaul fleet as replacement aircraft.

MEA youth crusade

MEETINGS & Events Australia has embarked on a new initiative to listen to the voice of youth at its regular board meetings.

Staff under 30 who work for a MEA member are invited to attend the meetings every six weeks (or so) in North Sydney, to share views and ideas, while also gaining invaluable experience.

"We've always valued the ideas of young professionals and feel this could really help bring those ideas into fruition," MEA chief executive officer Linda Gaunt said.

"Our YMEA (Youth MEA) program is widely successful in helping young event professionals establish themselves in the industry, now we want to give them a chance to learn from the industry hierarchy," Gaunt added.

MEA will cover travel expenses.

Quest King St opens

THE latest Quest Serviced Apartments property opened its doors in South Australia today.

Located at 379 King William St, Quest King William features a spread of 105 studio, one- & two-bedroom units, conference facilities, a gym and rooftop BBQ.

CEO Zed Sanjana said Adelaide's growth prospects are strong and demand for corporate extended stays are on the increase.

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Face for Arnhem Land

TWENTY different Yolngu communities have joined forces to unveil a united brand identity to promote tourism to Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory.

A Yolngu Tourism Masterplan blueprint under the umbrella of the Lirwi Yolngu Tourism Aboriginal Corporation identifies dozens of new indigenous tourism ventures for the region.

The plan aims to help improve Australia's profile internationally through new indigenous tourism ventures & to cultivate economic independence for communities.

"We have a vision to develop as many as 50 new Indigenous-owned businesses that will employ up to 1000 Yolngu people in Arnhem Land by 2032," brand chairman Djawa 'Timmy' Burarrwanga commented - more info at www.lirwitourism.com.au.

MEANWHILE, the new brand Lirwi Tourism has today launched two new tour itineraries allowing visitors to experience Indigenous traditions and stay with Yolngu families in their ancestral lands.

Departures are set to begin from next month, each catering for 8-14 people, departing from Nhulunbuy, priced from \$3,000pp.

Tours are inclusive of all meals, accom, transport and much more.

GDS buys more eNett

TRAVELPORT has increased its stake in the integrated travel payment service co-founded with PSP International - eNett Int'l - from 57% to 73%.

The GDS giant has held the majority stake in the venture since its inception in Jun 2009.

While PSP International has reduced its share in the venture, the deal saw the company sign a long-term deal with Travelport to provide a variety of banking services as part of the ongoing rollout of the Virtual Account Numbers (VANs) system.

The transaction sees the eNett International joint venture valued at approx US\$450 million.

Goldfields drive route

A NEW self-drive touring route in the Goldfields region of Vic has been opened connecting the towns of Bendigo and Ballarat & a number of towns in between.

Towns visited include Creswick, Clunes, Talbot, Maryborough and Dunolly and takes visitors on a scenic alternative to the Midland Highway & attractions en route.

The opening of the 150km Goldfields Way Touring Route was praised by Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive Chris Meddows-Taylor as an exciting way for travellers to get to know the state's Gold Rush history.

"It is a more interesting and picturesque route, and will really allow travellers to explore the character and heritage of the region as a whole," he added.

Cash cards on the increase

USAGE of travel cash cards is rapidly on the increase among Australian travellers, according to research conducted by payment services provider OzForex.

The data showed Euros was the dominant currency loaded onto travel cards for the northern hemisphere summer holidays to Europe, closely followed by winter seasons in the United States.

Almost half of funds converted in Jun 2014 were Euros, while retirees & student travellers were identified as the biggest users of travel cash cards, the study found.

OzForex head of product Margaret de Polignac said older Australians were astute planners of holiday finance and were more experienced with maximising their travel budgets.

"Retirees have much more

leisure time to take overseas trips and are often budget conscious.

"Travel money cards offer much more competitive exchange rates than airport currency booths, bureaux de change and travellers cheques," de Polignac added.

Applications for new cards doubled in Jun, setting a new year-on-year record, OzForex said, with reload rates also strong.

A recent MasterCard Research and Markets report prediction showed Australia's consumer travel card market will reach \$9.2 billion annually by 2017.

The report showed the Asia-Pacific region as the fastest growing region worldwide for prepaid travel cards.

Film sites of New York

LOCATIONS in more than 60 classic movies shot in New York City can be visited as part of a new bus tour launched in the city.

Launched by On Location Tours in conjunction with Turner Classic Movies, the three-hour tour runs three-times weekly and showcases sites used in *King Kong*, *Superman*, *The Seven-Year Itch*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* & more.

Marriott Bali opening

MARRIOTT International has opened its second Courtyard by Marriott branded property in Bali and 31st Courtyard hotel in Asia.

The Courtyard by Marriott Bali Seminyak offers 290 rooms and suites, lagoon pool, fitness centre, Kids Club and restaurant.

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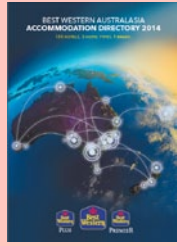
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Brochures of the Week

WELCOME to Brochures of the Week, *Travel Daily's* Monday feature. If your firm is releasing a new brochure you'd like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description summarising its features and itineraries, including a PDF of the front cover, and contact details to brochures@traveldaily.com.au.



Best Western Australasia Accom Directory 2014/15
Boasting nearly 180 properties across Australia & New Zealand, the blue and gold of Best Western details the group's reach in a modern and refreshing layout. The guide differentiates the company's three sub-brands (Best Western, Best Western Plus and Best Western Premier), backed with images both of the property and the area in which it is located. The guide also showcases on-site restaurants, helpful travel tips, trivia, individual websites and the Best Western Rewards loyalty program.



Portuscale Cruises - Southern Hemisphere Collection
For five months from Jan-May 2015, recent startup line Portuscale Cruises will bring its recently acquired ship *M/V Funchal* to Australian waters for a series of cruises from regional ports on the east coast. Sailings of four, six and eight days from Newcastle and Geelong will set sail, bookended by 45-day repositioning voyages from Barcelona to Australia and then to Portsmouth. The company's inaugural local brochure details all voyages and covers the onboard experience of a former Presidential yacht.



Globus - United States and Canada 2015
Four new itineraries make their debut in a range of 50 in the newest USA/Canada guide from Globus. For rail buffs, these include new Rocky Mountaineer journeys departing from Seattle and tours encompassing trains of the old west and cowboy country. Tours immerse guests in the great American outdoors, with chances to explore Yosemite National Park in winter. Fans of the big cities are not forgotten, with lots of exploration of the major centres including New York, Las Vegas, Hollywood and more.



Lindblad Expeditions - National Geographic Orion.
Having taken possession of the ship earlier this year, Lindblad Expeditions has embarked on a new wave of exploration for the vessel, with a range of exciting new adventures lined up and detailed in this new brochure. Details of 13 voyages taking the vessel around the world are planned for 2015, each backed by stunning photography. The ship will traverse seas and oceans across the southern hemisphere, visiting islands and bays few others tread, with subject experts onboard to enhance the trip.



Topdeck - USA & Canada 2015/16
Nineteen adventures in the US and Canada populate the latest brochure from the youth tour specialist. An editorial feature entitled 'Great North American Bucket List' lists the unique experiences available and covers food highlights, sporting events and tips for planning a memorable trip, with a range designed to suit travellers on all budgets. Four brand new itineraries have been developed for the season, including the 10-day Golden States California trip and the 21-day American Dream from LA to Miami.

Tramada EMD in place

ELECTRONIC Miscellaneous Document functionality has been fully developed and available in Tramada systems, the firm said.

The function has been gradually rolled out since Apr and has now been completed with all GDSs.

When EMDs are present in a booking and downloaded to Tramada, segment details are now automatically created.

SQ code to AUS on VX

VIRGIN America is seeking a green light from the US transport regulator to place the code of Singapore Airlines on its flights between San Francisco & Austin.

The US-based carrier said it plans to commence the expanded codeshare with SQ within 30 days.

Amadeus strong half

TECHNOLOGY firm Amadeus has reported double-digit growth in passengers boarded by airlines in its IT Solutions business for the first half of 2014, with 328.5 million pax served, up 15.6%.

On the distribution side of business, total air travel bookings jumped 3.8% to 241.8 million.

Asia-Pacific made up 13.7% of this market - an identical result on last year - with 33m transactions.

Organic growth and acquisitions saw the company post an 8.5% jump in revenue overall to €1.7b, a result impacted by the purchase of Newmarket Int'l (**TD** 28 Apr).

Half-year profits closed at €380.6 million, a climb of 8.9%.

UK reunites for show

TOURISM Ireland will exhibit at the new VisitBritain flagship show ExploreGB, which will take place at Ascot Racecourse next Feb.

The international destination promotion event will see TI join VisitBritain, VisitScotland, London and Partners, VisitWales and VisitEngland exhibiting to more than 250 global travel buyers.

More than 150 tourism suppliers from across the continent are so far registered to meet with buyers.

Celebrity hosted famil

SANTA Monica Convention and Visitors Bureau has joined forces with Air New Zealand to launch a new agent incentive to win a spot on a famil trip to the LA hotspot.

The trip will be hosted by Santa Monica Ambassadors and stars of the Seven Network's *My Kitchen Rules*, Luke Hines & Scott Gooding.

Entries for the famil will be open for the month of Aug, with the trip running from 22-28 Nov.

Eight winners will be selected for the educational and will stay at a luxury Santa Monica hotel, enjoying activities such as cycling the boardwalk, dining at award-winning restaurants and more.

To enter, make bookings for any Santa Monica hotel & email proof to santamonica@gate7.com.au.

Alternatively, book any airfare with NZ to North America, with the PNR incorporating a LAX stop and including an OSI, which can be obtained by **CLICKING HERE**.

Bonus entries will be awarded to participants of an Air New Zealand webinar, which will take place on 13 Aug at 8:30am AEST - **CLICK HERE** to register to view.

F1 good for Australia

MELBOURNE will continue to benefit from hosting its annual Formula One race until 2020, it was announced last weekend.

A new five-year deal was agreed to see the race remain at Albert Park, with the Tourism & Transport Forum saying the event will deliver "significant benefits for Melbourne and Victoria" in the form of between \$70-\$80m a year in total economic benefits.

"The Grand Prix is an iconic event for the city and each year attracts tens of thousands of additional visitors from interstate and overseas," TTF acting ceo Trent Zimmerman said.

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Celebrity Interview with Steven Jacobs



CHANNEL Nine's weather presenter Steven Jacobs describes his current role as being like home, which is strange because even he admits he is rarely there.

Jacobs is on the road, so to speak, well over 250 days a year, discovering new places & delivering the entertaining reports that have endeared him to Australian households.

Vanuatu has woven its way into Jacobs' heart following a number of recent visits, and he speaks about it with great fervour and passion as the celebrity ambassador for Vanuatu Tourism Office.

At the Vanuatu Tourism roadshow in Sydney earlier this year, Jacobs sat down with **Travel Daily** for a look at the many highlights of his career.

How did you come to be involved with the Vanuatu Tourism Office?

About an hour after I booked a holiday there for my wife and I about five years ago, Vanuatu Tourism Office rang my producer at *Today* asking if we could do the weather there. Since that, we have been back many times and simply love the place.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I've been very lucky so work on so many great shows and with so many great people. Straight out of high school, I hosted a kids show for five years before branching out into acting on a show called All Together Now where I worked with an ensemble cast which included Jon English, Rebecca Gibney and Jane Hall. All such bizarre and different personalities but we clicked and did 100 episodes of that, and it was a No 1 rating show.

What is your favourite holiday spot?

Outside of Vanuatu, there have been several we loved. We had a surprising holiday in Uruguay one time. It's also really hard to go past Paris.

Who is one person you wish you could sit next to on a plane?

I'd love to sit on a plane next to John Travolta. Or any comedian.

What is one of the most exotic destinations you have travelled to?

I think one of the most unique places for me in the world after travelling so much is still South Africa. It's the only place in the world that offers

what they have in terms of safaris. But personally, we keep going back to Vanuatu. It has become our soul food.

Do you have a travel tip for our readers?

I always take a good book as I spend so much time on planes and in hotel rooms. Also, if you're travelling with kids, definitely the iPad. In the South Pacific, one movie and a couple of games and you're there. And, take the right attitude when you go travelling. Take a smile and a good attitude.

What is one thing you cannot leave home without?

My wife...she kind of insists that she comes everywhere that she can. Apart from that, my phone charger. Fifty bucks for a phone charger has got to be the biggest scam in the known universe. I've spent so much money on phone chargers over the years.

Do you have an embarrassing travel story that you can share with us?

We've had situations come up on the *Today* show which have been quite embarrassing, particularly when they go global on YouTube. I've been attacked by a black chicken, by three gorillas on the other side of a glass wall and had a live camel snorting in my face for four minutes of a live cross.

What features do you look for when choosing a hotel?

Work normally picks my hotels, but when travelling personally, we're after something off-the-beaten-track. We like the new, different and unexplored.

Monday 4th August 2014

BW expands Phuket

BEST Western is preparing to open its third property in Phuket and 13th in Thailand overall, as the Best Western Patong Beach.

Slated to open in Oct, the new hotel will offer 224 rooms and will be located approximately 1km from Patong Beach itself.

Facilities on-site will include a fitness centre, business centre, swimming pool and restaurant.

Tabubil downgraded

DFAT has lowered its warning level for Tabubil in the Western Province of Papua New Guinea to "High Degree of Caution" bringing it in line with the warning status for the country overall.

Peach World Journeys

LUXURY tour operator Bill Peach Journeys has released its 2015 brochure, showcasing a range of new itineraries featuring exotic destinations.

The season includes plateaued regions of Tibet to Burma, Mexico and the Caribbean, among others.

Early bird savings of \$1,000pp on top of limousine airport arrival transfers or one night pre-tour accom are on offer for bookings paid in full before 30 Sep 2014.

Investment in Arnhem

NORTHERN Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles has released a new investment guide for the East Arnhem region aimed at luring new tourism investment.

The East Arnhem Investment Guide identifies a range of new revenue streams in a range of industries including tourism, with Giles saying private capital was needed to get projects underway.

WIN A LUXURY SOUTH OF FRANCE RIVER CRUISE

Throughout August, **Travel Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a luxury all-inclusive river cruise, courtesy of **Scenic Tours**.

The all-inclusive prize includes return economy class airfares to Europe, a 13 day South of France Luxury River Cruise for two adults with private butler service, all meals, complimentary beverages all day, all tipping and gratuities and airport transfers.

Every day this month **TD** will ask a different question about Scenic Tours France River Cruises. The subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this great prize.

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

Q2: How many cruise and tour itineraries that incorporate the Siene River are available?

[Click HERE](#) for hints



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SCENIC TOURS

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Travel Sales Representative

Sydney – Competitive : 1154SJ3

A leading travel wholesaler is looking for a business development executive to help promote their niche product across the NSW travel market. If you are a travel consultant but want to move away from consulting then this is for you. Predominantly on the road you will visit clients & increase your company's market share while also sourcing new business. A golden opportunity for a candidate looking for a more diverse role with a real chance to progress in your travel career.

For further information please call Sarah on (02) 9113 7272 or click [APPLY](#) now

Cruise Travel Specialist

Melbourne \$Attractive Package Ref:1246KF1

If you have cruise product knowledge, reservations experience, customer service skills & ability to work to sales targets, this is the role for you! This global company are looking for new consultants to join their team. As a cruise consultant, you will be responsible for selling a wide array of cruise products to various worldwide destinations. You will enjoy delivering the highest levels of customer service at all times whilst meeting call targets and conversion rates.

For more information please call Kate on (02) 9113 7272 or click [APPLY](#) now.

Corporate Travel BDM

Perth \$50-85K OTE Ref:1243LB2

Amazing new opportunity! Ready to leave consulting behind and get involved in business development? No two days the same! If you have a great sales record, and looking to move into the corporate world then this global company is for you. You will be sourcing new leads, building rapport with our clients and developing relationships with key accounts. Uncapped earning potential and great lifestyle on offer for outgoing and enthusiastic travel industry professionals!

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Senior Travel Consultant or 2IC

Brisbane. \$DOE - Ref:1233PS1

Are you a Senior TC or 2IC looking for a fresh challenge where you will get the work life balance you have been looking for? If you have solid fares & ticketing experience and are seeking a role with an above average base salary, this position with a growing independent travel company may be just what you have been searching for! Casual dress code, fun & friendly working environment are what you can expect to walk into. Exciting time to be joining this growing company!

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Are you a fun loving entertainment consultant with experience on Sabre and Tramada? We need you!! We have an excellent opportunity for a consultant to make the move into an award winning corporate agency in the CBD. Positions at this particular branch do not come up often so you will need to get in fast! If you have 2 years experience in a similar role and are looking for an opportunity to go above and beyond for your clients then this is the role for you!

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