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Helloworld close to 1000

SIXTEEN months after its debut, Helloworld Limited is closing in on 1,000 branded, associate and affiliate member travel agencies as its core group under the three retail models in Australia.

Helloworld Limited's recently elected chairman Brett Johnson revealed the figure today in his address during the company's 2014 annual general meeting.

The total does not include Concorde Agency Network agents, New Zealand agents and those opting to remain as HWT, Travelscene, Jetset & Travelworld.

Johnson said the impending milestone continued to position the company as "a strong competitor in the highly profitable Australian travel sector".

CEO Elizabeth Gaines said early trading forecasts for the 2014/15 financial year had the company on track to record an EBITDAI reduction of between \$5-10m

compared to 2014 due to the decrease in network numbers.

The company achieved a 3% growth in TTV for the four months to 31 Oct, which Gaines said was "in line with expectations".

She added the Helloworld store refresh program had been "substantially completed", with 26 locations fitted as Ambassador stores and more in the pipeline.

"The brand's momentum continues to grow nationwide."

VA/SA FF agreement

MEMBERS of Virgin Australia's Velocity and South African Airways' Voyager frequent flyer programs can now earn and burn points on both carriers under a new reciprocal agreement.

Taking effect early next year, the deal applies to all domestic and int'l routes, including Airlink, SA Express and all domestic, short and long-haul VA operated flights.

SAA customer loyalty executive Suretha Cruse said the carrier has had "very positive feedback" since launching the codeshare on the Virgin Australia domestic network (**TD** 01 Oct).

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos, plus a full page from: (**click**):

- AA Appointments jobs

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Scenic confirms Mekong

SCENIC Tours has confirmed the expansion of its river cruise product beyond Europe, with the Australian-owned company to tap into the evolving Indochina cruise market from 2016.

Revealed exclusively by **Travel Daily** earlier this year (**TD** 11 Apr), company founder Glen Moroney this week said he was thrilled to unveil Scenic's "signature blend of all-inclusive luxury river cruising to South East Asia".

Scenic Tours has invested more than \$10 million into the project, developing its own 68-guest product and building on its vast European shipbuilding know-how.

Scenic's custom-designed five-

star *Scenic Spirit* will debut on the Mekong River, operating seven-night itineraries between Ho Chi Minh City and Siem Reap, starting 26 Jan 2016.

The 34 all-balcony one-bedroom suites aboard *Scenic Spirit* will feature separate bedroom, living room and balconies, ranging in size from the 32sqm Deluxe Suite to the massive 80sqm Royal Panorama Suite - the largest suite of any river cruise ship in the world, according to Scenic Tours.

At 85m in length, *Scenic Spirit* is larger than most vessels cruising the Mekong & boasts four dining venues, a resort style pool deck and bar, full spa with sauna and steam room, bar & lounge, Sun Deck, open air cinema and more.

All guests will be pampered with butler service along with an array of *Scenic FreeChoice* activities & *Scenic Enrich* special events.

Scenic Spirit is the 13th vessel to join the Scenic fleet which spans Europe, Russia & South East Asia.

Prices for the cruise start at \$2,495 per person twin share.

CLICK HERE to view a gallery of artist impressions of the ship.

DL \$13b Airbus order

DELTA Air Lines has confirmed an order with Airbus for 50 long-haul wide-body aircraft, valued at list prices of US\$14 billion.

The order will be split between A330neo and A350-900neo jets, with the carrier looking to replace its 747-400 and 767-300ER fleet.

DL plans to introduced the A350 primarily on US-Asia routes from 2017 and the A330neo in 2019.

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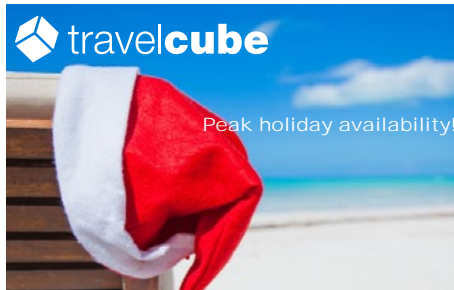
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ACCC queries EY/AZ impacts

THE Australian Competition & Consumer Commission has sought clarification from Alitalia on how its proposed partnership with Etihad Airways will impact its current arrangements and agreements with Qantas.

Yesterday, **Travel Daily** revealed Etihad Airways and Alitalia are hopeful of gaining a green light for a cooperation agreement on scheduling and pricing for air services to Australia.

In order to speed up their proposed conduct, EY and AZ have urged the ACCC to decide in favour of interim authorisation (by 06 Nov), ahead of a final determination in Feb/Mar 2015.

The competition regulator said it needs to know "any changes anticipated in the future" for the current relationship between Alitalia and Qantas, if the proposed partnership between the applicants was to proceed.

At the moment, Alitalia has a

Frequent Flyer agreement with Qantas for passengers flying on eligible AZ fares and flights.

It also sought details on what existing city pair routes operated by AZ & EY they already overlap.

The ACCC said it expects to hand down a draft determination on the partnership during Dec, with a final decision expected by Mar.

MEANWHILE, Etihad Airways has overnight confirmed it plans to begin a new codeshare deal with Alitalia on services between Abu Dhabi and Milan Malpensa and Venice (**TD** yesterday).

The new AZ routes (not AY, as mentioned in **Travel Daily** yesterday), will operate on a daily basis from 29 Mar using three class Airbus A330-200 aircraft.

The "major codeshare expansion" will triple AZ's service frequencies between Italy and Abu Dhabi, while EY plans to add its code to 15 domestic routes operated by Alitalia from Rome Fiumicino.

VA departures on top

VIRGIN Australia has turned the tables on rival carrier Qantas for on-time performance, achieving the best on-time arrivals with a score of 88.9% during Oct.

Qantas flights arrived on time at a rate of 88.6% during the month, followed by Jetstar (82.2%) and Tigerair (80.2%).

Leading on-time arrivals was QF with 88.7%, and then VA (87.5%), JQ (83.5%) & TT (77.8%), govt data released this morning shows.

FC campaign results

BOOKINGS to the United States jumped 22% year-on-year as a result of the Brand USA / *Sunrise* USA road trip campaign, held in conjunction with the Channel 7 breakfast show and Flight Centre.

The pitch saw the *Sunrise* team travel to five US cities in five days, with weekend weather crosses emanating from two more cities.

Brand USA Australia/NZ director Oliver Philpot said the subsequent Flight Centre promotion was "the most successful campaign Brand USA has run in Australia to date".

Sunrise's daily average audience during the campaign was 1.88m.

DNSW Top Gear coup

MOTORING television presenter Richard Hammond will for the first time join co-hosts Jeremy Clarkson & James May at the *Top Gear* Festival Sydney next year.

The event will take place on the 18-19 Apr weekend at Sydney Motorsport Park at Eastern Creek, with tickets now on sale.

Window Seat

COULD turbulence on planes soon be a thing of the past?

Researchers from Melbourne's RMIT University have lodged a patent application for a system which studies the way birds use their feathers to detect and fly through air disturbances, which they hope to develop further and apply to commercial aircraft.

Significant studying of flying motions by birds and testing on micro-planes was carried out to develop the system, which aims to replicate the air flows which allow birds to fly gracefully.

Advanced sensing detects flow disturbances before they even occur, allowing planes to adjust & fly smoothly, decreasing wing loads and boosting aircraft life.

Aus Open question 3

QUESTION three in our comp to win two double passes daily to the Emirates Australian Open golf championship in Sydney next week is: *How many daily flights does Emirates offer from Sydney to Dubai?*

To enter the competition, be the first two **Travel Daily** readers to email the correct response to emirates@traveldaily.com.au.

On Mon, we will feature a 4th question to win another two double passes to the Australian Open, plus there will be a grand prize question to win an 'Inside the Ropes' experience.

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MOVEMBER will see multitudes of males growing mo's to raise funds for the Movember Foundation's programs and to encourage community awareness and support around men's health.

Amadeus IT Pacific men are putting out the challenge to the travel industry to raise funds for the cause. The person who raises the most money will win a **Shaving Brush Travel Kit**.

It's not too late to join - **register at au.movember.com** (add your company name after your name and choose to join the **Amadeus IT Pacific team**).

Email your before and after pics and progress updates to mocomp@traveldaily.com.au and we will showcase them on **Facebook** and in **Travel Daily**.

Get involved as an Amadeus Mo Bro! Click **HERE** to learn more about the program.

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Tauk heli-touring

IN CELEBRATION of its 90th anniversary, Tauk will operate six helicopter-assisted adventures in the Canadian Rockies in Jul and Aug next year.

The seven-day itinerary includes three nights at Bugaboo Lodge in the Purcell Mountains and daily guided walks in alpine regions, priced from \$5,990ppts.

Ambitious EK targets

EMIRATES is aiming to grow its profit at between 8-10% each year "as a conservative figure", its president Tim Clark said at an aviation conference in Dubai.

Despite a number of declining currencies in markets served which will impact profits, Clark said the falling oil price will help its balance sheet in months ahead.

The Dubai-based carrier will also take delivery of three new A380 superjumbo aircraft in the next month, takings its fleet size to 57.

MEANWHILE, EK has released a new iPhone app that enables users to search and book flights as well as check-in and download boarding passes to Passbook.

Other app features include push notifications for check-in, flight boarding, gate changes, baggage belt numbers and chauffeur-drive service, seat selection and more.

Raffles coming to IST

RAFFLES Hotels & Resorts will boost its portfolio to 12 properties with the opening of Raffles Jakarta from 01 Jan.

The property will feature 173 rooms & suites and is offering a 25% discount for stays between 01 Jan and 31 Mar.

Koningsdam on sale

HOLLAND America Line will begin taking bookings for the launch sailing of its newest vessel *ms Koningsdam* from 01 Dec.

The 'Premiere Voyage' will sail round-trip from Civitavecchia on 20 Feb 2016 through the Med.

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Asia riding cruising wave

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has released the results of a thorough analysis of data on the Asia cruise region, showing the area will host 981 individual departures next year, up from 802 two years earlier.

The study was conducted by CHART Management Consultants for the newly formed CLIA Southeast Asia & Northeast Asia.

It follows on from the Asia Cruise Association White Paper, which was carried out last year.

The "Analysis, Assessment, Appreciation" study looked at trends in capacity and deployment in 2013 and 2014.

CLIA ceo Christine Duffy said cruise lines and stakeholders were keen to better understand trends and the potential size of the source markets in Asia.

CLIA Southeast Asia chair and Carnival Australia ceo Ann Sherry added the report shows Asia held exponential growth opportunities.

"The scale of cruising in Asia and its growth over these three short years is remarkable. Next year will see 26 cruise brands operate 52 ships in Asia, nine of which are year-round," she said.

Cruise lines were now taking notice, with capacity for 1.4m guests last year exploding to offer space for more than 2m next year - a growth rate of 19.5 percent.

"On top of that, another 115,360 guests may transit through Asia on longer voyages, up 25 percent per annum from the 73,616 capacity in 2013," Sherry added.

The report also found that the Asian market was overwhelmingly geared toward short cruises of 2-3 days, however the 4-6 night length is now the fastest growing.

Next year, 792 out of the 981 scheduled departures in Asia will run for seven days or less, with 162 running between 7-14 days.

For the Cruise Trends Project report in its entirety, **CLICK HERE**.

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2014 EDITORS' PICKS

CRUISE CRITIC

Insight's Gold Ray of sunshine

THREE years ago Insight Vacations launched its Gold Program off the back of an extremely successful Egypt product.

The Gold Program has since been extended and today encompasses 20 tours including seven itineraries each across Europe and North America and six itineraries on its India program, with add-ons available to Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan.

Additionally, the Gold Program has been enhanced this year to be all-inclusive (**TD 07** Nov) incorporating evening meals, excursions and Signature experiences to allow guests a seamless travel experience.

Hundreds of new experiences, more leisure time and Freestyle dining options - giving guests the opportunity to dine wherever they want - have also been added to the program.

Insight Vacations managing director Joost Timmer told **Travel Daily**, "The enhanced Gold Program coincides with the best-of-the-best in escorted touring".

In Australia this week is the company's first Global Brand Ambassador Lisa Ray to launch the 2015 Gold Luxury Collection, following her recent travel encounters on Insight Gold's Italian Vogue and Imperial Rajasthan itineraries.

Appointed to the role earlier this year, Lisa is an internationally acclaimed film actress starring in the Oscar-nominated film *Water*,



a TV host on *Top Chef Canada*, entrepreneur and humanitarian.

"Lisa is so well-versed in travel with a diverse background, and is representative of the Insight Vacations culture and its distributions," Timmer said at a function yesterday.

Ray shared her tour highlights that have made her a convert to travelling the 'Insight way', including staying at handpicked Signature hotels, avoiding line-ups, soaking up the culture through unique experiences such as visiting the Bramante Staircase in the Vatican Museum, the luxury of dining independently or with your group and travelling in a coach featuring Business class legroom and wi-fi.

Lisa Ray's experiences on the Italian and Indian journeys can be viewed on Insight Vacations' website - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Pictured above at the InterContinental Double Bay in Sydney yesterday is Joost Timmer and Lisa Ray.

Travel Daily First with the news

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15% comm on Turkey

TEMPO Holidays is offering travel agents 15% commission on a batch of its Turkey tours when booked before 31 Dec.

Clients who book and deposit by the same date will also receive a 10% discount on the tour price.

The deal applies to seven of Tempo's itineraries, including the 10-day 1001 Colours of Turkey, 14-day Legends of Turkey and eight-day Classic Turkey.

Le Club bonus points

TRIPLE points are available to members of Le Club Accorhotels when booking a stay at select Accor properties between now & 28 Feb - **CLICK HERE** for full info.

AA drop squeeze plan

AMERICAN Airlines has opted not to proceed with a plan to squeeze more seats into regional aircraft after the plan was soundly rejected by pilot unions.

Pilots said such a move would allow AA to introduce smaller jets onto more routes, resulting in lower wages and higher profits.

The American Airlines Group continues to reap record profits, with the AA/US parent recording net profits of US\$1.2 billion for the three months to Sep 2014.

Win The Hunter by Tony Park

This week **Travel Daily** and Swagman Tours is giving five lucky readers the chance to win *The Hunter* by Australian author Tony Park.

Safari guide and private investigator Hudson Brand is on the trail of Linley Brown who's been named as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Linley's friend, Kate, supposedly died in a fiery car accident in Zimbabwe, but Kate's sister wants to believe it is an elaborate fraud. South African detective Sannie van Rensburg is also looking for Linley, as well as a serial killer who has been murdering prostitutes on Sannie's watch. Top of her list of suspects is Hudson!

To win, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below to:

tonypark@traveldaily.com.au.

Check out www.tonypark.net or www.swagmanafrika.com.au for a hint.

Swagman Africa have two Africa GSA products: name both of them.

R&C SA addition

HENTLEY Farm Restaurant in the Barossa Valley has been admitted into the Paris-based Relais & Chateaux collection.

The two-year old restaurant is the second member Relais & Chateaux member in South Australia and sixth in Australia.



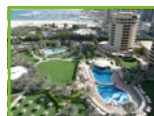
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Travel Specials

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.

Hong Kong's bargain four-night stay deal from **Amazing Vacations** has proven popular, with more properties joining the promotion. The Harbour Plaza Metropolis and The Kowloon Hotel have joined the Harbour Grand Kowloon and the Harbour Plaza North Point in offering a four-night stay with transfers and more priced from \$399. Phone 1300 651 099 for details.

Fiji's **Namale Resort & Spa** is kicking off the holiday season with a Stay 7 Pay 5 deal plus a \$500 credit for the airfare there. Valid for new bookings by 30 Nov, for stays to 01 Jun. Email reservations@namaleresort.com.

Time is running out for partners to fly for free on **Aurora Expeditions'** 2015 Kimberley Coast voyages, with a saving of \$700 able to be enjoyed. The 11-day Broome to Darwin or v.v trip includes two nights pre and post cruise accom, plus much more. Book by 30 Nov on (02) 9252 1033.

Savings of up to 65% are available in the lead-up to Christmas at **Semara Seminyak**, with Executive Suites and Poolside Rooms starting from US\$152++ for stays from 20-25 Dec. Info at www.semaraseminyak.com.

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BATA slams fee spike

A PROPOSAL by the UK Labour opposition to hit visitors from 55 visa-waiver nationalities with a £10 entry levy has been heavily criticised by the British Air Transport Association.

BATA chief executive Nathan Stower said current fees and taxes were already too high.

"Visitors from countries like the USA and Australia already pay the highest air passenger tax in the world to fly to the UK - £71 from next April - contributing billions of pounds to the Treasury.

"Adding yet another charge will make the UK more uncompetitive in attracting tourists, businesses and inbound investment," Stower commented earlier this week.

G20 praise for BNE

DEPUTY Prime Minister Warren Truss has congratulated Brisbane Airport for minimising delays to scheduled passenger aircraft for head-of-state jets during the G20.

"Brisbane Airport delivered an exemplary experience for passengers through this busy time, meeting a significant challenge head-on," Truss said.

On-time performance for the facility during the G20 weekend closed at an 81.6% average, according to government figures.

Augusta Harbour open

TOURISM to the Margaret River region in WA among mariners will be boosted "unquestionably" with the opening today of the new \$36.4 million Augusta Harbour, Augusta Margaret River Tourism ceo Pip Close said.

Development of the working harbour facility included \$34.6m from the WA state government.

Sydney's Viennese Salon



EARLIER this week the Austrian National Tourist Office brought a little piece of Vienna to Australia, in the form of a "society rendezvous" at a North Sydney penthouse designed by Viennese-born Aussie architect Harry Seidler.

In true Viennese tradition, the evening was a "contemporary interpretation of salon culture" showcasing art, literature and music with a number of dignitaries present including Norbert Kettner, ceo of the Vienna Tourist Board.

Kettner told **TD** that 2015 is set to be a huge year for the Austrian capital which will see it host the Eurovision Song Contest.

The main event takes place on 23 May with an estimated TV audience in excess of 200 million people worldwide.

There are also a series of lead-up performances, with 100,000 tickets up for grabs in total.

Contestants from 40 nations are expected for Eurovision 2015 which also marks the 60th anniversary of the quirky event. Kettner said he was thrilled to be part of the Vienna Salon in Australia, which evokes the city's status in the 19th century as a "powerhouse for intellectual exchange".

Salons were conducted in the great houses of the city, most located on the iconic "Ringstrasse" which celebrates its 150th anniversary next year.

A special book has been created for the commemoration, with contributions by 13 respected



international authors including Australian writer and art historian Timothy Bonyhady, who was in attendance at the event.

Pictured at top from left are Norbert Kettner, Vienna Tourist Board ceo; Elke Bachner, Vienna Tourist Board marketing manager; Barbara Whitten, Anywhere Travel; Austrian ambassador Helmut Boeck; and Tim Harrowell of Emirates.

Inset are Astrid Mulholland-Licht, Austrian National Tourist Office Sydney; Norbert Kettner; Penelope Seidler and author Timothy Bonyhady.

Record day at NTL

FIGURES from Newcastle Airport showed the facility had its busiest ever day last month, with 4,598 pax flying in or taking off.

The mark was 44% above the daily average of 3,200 passengers. A \$14.5m construction project to double the terminal area is due for completion late next year.

WIN with Air Mauritius

This month **Travel Daily** is giving the travel industry a chance to win a trip to Mauritius, courtesy of **Air Mauritius** and **Sun Resorts**.

The prize includes:

- 2 return economy flights between Perth and Mauritius (excluding taxes)
- 4 nights staying Long Beach resort
- Breakfast daily

Everyday **TD** will ask a different question about Mauritius. The subscriber with the most correct answers and the most creative answer to the final question will win this great prize.

Send your answers to: mauritiustcomp@traveldaily.com.au

What are the three main languages spoken in Mauritius?

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With Christmas only 5 weeks away there has never been a better time to apply for new roles! This wholesaler is looking for an experienced consultant to join their Perth team in January 2015. Booking worldwide holidays for your loyal travel agents you will be rewarded with uncapped earnings and exclusive famils, incentives and more! If you have passion for sales but are looking to step away from everyday face to face consulting then this is the career move you don't want to miss out on! Contact AA today to find out more!

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Is your passion selling cruise? Opportunities exist for you to choose from a boutique agency to a global wholesale travel company specialising in something you love. As an experienced Travel Consultant you will have a strong knowledge for cruise. Be a part of some sensational teams, booking a variety of destinations, earn a strong salary and enjoy fantastic educational. If you have a minimum of 2 years experience as an International Consultant and strong sales skills we want to hear from you today!

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SPORTS TRAVEL CONSULTANT

GOLD COAST – up to \$55K PKG

Looking to get away from retail travel? Want to move into a specialised sporting market? Then this role is for you! This travel specialist is looking for a superstar to join their team arranging all aspects of group travel bookings including International and Domestic travel for their high end clientele. A top salary package, travel discounts and only Mon - Fri hours are on offer. To grab a hold of this amazing role you will need 2 years experience, great customer service skills and attention to detail! Don't wait - interviewing now!