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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Monday 23rd January 2017

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## NTIA nominations open!

AFTA has opened nominations for this year's National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA), while announcing this year's event will be held at the newly opened International Convention Centre Sydney at Darling Harbour.

The 2017 NTIA is shaping up to be the biggest yet and was officially launched this morning at Qantas headquarters, honouring the airline's role as the awards' major sponsor and platinum partner to AFTA.

Chief executive Jayson Westbury said AFTA's choice of the ICC Sydney would allow space for up to 1,500 guests this year.

"The new venue will accommodate the overwhelming ticket requests received each year and enable more of the industry

to join in the celebrations.

"Sponsors and attending guests are in for a treat as the AFTA team has even more surprises in store for next year," Westbury said.

Qantas will host the 2017 finalist judging at its Mascot HQ, giving the industry a peek at its modern campus.

QF executive manager customer and commercial relationships Vanessa Hudson, said "The NTIAs shine a spotlight on the best that our industry has to offer which is why we're delighted to be the event's major sponsor for ten years running".

To nominate or for more info see [afta.com.au/events/ntia](http://afta.com.au/events/ntia).

### Silversea flight offer

**SILVERSEA** Cruises is offering free economy return flights to Europe in conjunction with select voyages in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe.

The cruise line, which is also currently showcasing its extensive portfolio on Australian television (see [cruiseweekly.com.au/videos](http://cruiseweekly.com.au/videos)) is highlighting the flight offer via the **cover page** of today's **TD**.

### Today's issue of TD

**Travel Daily** today has eight pages of news and photos, including a front cover page for **Silversea Cruises** plus full pages from: (**click**)

- One&Only Hayman Island
- AA Appointments jobs
- Women for Women

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First with the news

Monday 23rd January 2017

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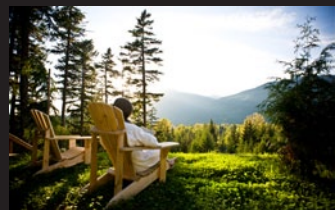
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## Hayman early escape

**ONE&ONLY** Hayman Island has released 'Early Escape' rates for stays between 01 May-11 Sep priced from \$705 per night - representing a 20% discount.

On sale from now through to 31 Mar, prices include breakfast and select resort activities - see **pg 9**.

## Canada Corroboree 2017



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## Webjet sucks up to trade

**THE** Australian online travel company that unashamedly continues to slam travel agents with its belittling TV commercials, Webjet, has rolled out a new rewards program overseas that it says aspires to "bring suppliers and agents closer".

Launched on Fri in Singapore for the Asian market under the guise of Webjet's B2B travel distributor FIT Ruums, the loyalty program, is "aimed at developing closer relationships" between front-line travel sellers and suppliers.

The scheme sees Webjet Ltd's FIT Ruums effectively act like a middle-man.

Dubbed FIT Rewards, the program has been rolled out to enable travel suppliers to directly "incentivise and educate agents" through a program of rewards from lifestyle products and hotel stays to bespoke event invitations and familiarisation trips.

"FIT Rewards creates a platform for our supplier partners to launch their new products, allowing more targeted product penetration, education and adoption by their key bookers in the travel trade," said Daryl Lee, director of FIT Ruum's parent company, WebBeds FZ.

In a slap in the face to Aussie travel agents, the program runs under the motto of "Always Stronger Together".

"By rewarding our members for every booking they make, we are driving additional value of our clients, suppliers and the wider

Asian travel industry," he added.

Lee said travel suppliers would be able to tailor their rewards to individual needs of each market.

"It is definitely a win-win for all parties involved."

FIT Ruums' chief commercial officer Kok Sheng Sun echoed the excitement of Lee, saying "we anticipate high demand from the agent community".

To kick-start the launch of FIT Rewards, agents signing up before the end of Jan will receive 1,000 bonus points, while the agency with the most bookings in Jan will receive rebates of 50% off booking values.

For over a year, Webjet has remained tight-lipped about its controversial TVCs which mock Australian travel agents, a topic brought into the trade media spotlight first by **Travel Daily**.

Webjet declined to comment when approached by **TD** for a remark on the agent strategy.

## Trafalgar campaign

"CUSTOMERS buy travel with their hearts and not their heads" - that is the key message in a new video released for travel agents by Trafalgar.

The two minute clip which you can **WATCH HERE** simplifies the sales process by emphasising the importance of using emotions and experiences as selling tools rather than rational aspects like price and hotel location.

"The clip is a tool for our retail partners to use to help grow their business and grow their sales with us," md of Trafalgar Matt Cameron-Smith told **TD** today.

**MEANWHILE** Trafalgar is also offering flights to Britain and Europe for \$899 return (**TD** Fri).

Cameron-Smith described the deal, which has no hidden conditions, as "the hottest ticket in town right now".

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**PONANT**  
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Monday 23rd January 2017



## Huge spike in Canada visits

**AUSTRALIA** was the standout source market for Canada during the month of Nov, with freshly released visitor numbers showing a whopping 42% year-on-year increase in arrivals.

Data shows the number of Aussie travellers entering Canada rose from 9,791 in Nov 2015 to a stellar 13,875, making this market Canada's sixth largest globally.

Only China, Japan and Atlantic neighbours (the UK, France and Germany) had higher numbers.

The Nov figure has also boosted Australia's year-to-date visitor tally to just shy of 300,000, up 15.4% on 12 months earlier.

The surprising result even had officials at Destination Canada's local post scratching their heads.

Destination Canada GSA md Donna Campbell told **Travel Daily** that FIT operators have reported

increased sales, with significant growth for The Yukon, especially for Northern Lights packages.

"Great airfares in the market also played their part in growth," she said, on top of Air Canada's new capacity out of Brisbane, while some operators have cited perceptions of Canada as a "safe" destination.

Air Canada gm Australia Paul McLean said load factors for Nov and Dec were high and there had been good conversions on incentives over the period.

Flight Centre chief operating officer Melanie Waters-Ryan said the group was currently seeing high demand for Canada and "strong double digit growth driven by good accessibility, frequency of air services and possibly the most competitive air pricing we have seen in a decade".

## QF set to update agents on SMEs

**QANTAS** is inviting travel agents to participate in an "important business update" on 01 Feb, promising to help them "support and grow your small to mid-sized business opportunities".

Details of the initiative will be announced during a series of live webinars taking place across the day, including opportunities for consultants to ask questions.

Agents can register for their preferred session time online at [qantas.com/agents](http://qantas.com/agents).

## Bookings Eclipsed

**SCENIC** customers have offered up their credit cards in response to the Australian operator's "discovery yacht" *Scenic Eclipse*, with almost 20% of bookings involving multiple departures.

At the cruise and touring group's annual 'Night of Stars' on Sat, executive gm Aleisha Fittler paid tribute to travel agents who had helped propel Scenic's first ocean ship into the Australian market.

Just twelve months since Scenic announced *Eclipse* (TD 16 Jan 2016), "sales have been overwhelmingly positive, far surpassing our expectations," Fittler said.

One customer had spent a record \$400,000 in a single booking involving multiple cruises and tours, helping to earn travel agent Lesley Johns first place as the top-selling New Zealand consultant of 2016.

See photos and more, **page 7**.



## Window Seat

**TURKISH** Airlines has snagged Hollywood stalwart Morgan Freeman to represent their brand in the USA.

Freeman will appear in a commercial for the Turkish flag carrier which is set to screen during the Super Bowl Final on 05 Feb.

According to media reports, filming for the advertisement started in Los Angeles last week.

It is the second year running TK has aired a commercial during the Super Bowl.

Last year the airline's *Batman vs Superman* themed ad played to an audience of 800 million.

Even more eyeballs are expected to be glued to the major event this year.

Freeman who is a pilot as well as an actor, holds a connection with Turkey, having visited in 2015 to shoot *The Story of God* series for the National Geographic Channel.

His silky smooth voice alone will no doubt be a powerful selling tool for the airline.



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Monday 23rd January 2017

## Wet'n'Wild hit by Dreamworld tragedy

**VILLAGE** Roadshow Theme Parks today confirmed the widespread impact of the deaths at Dreamworld last year, with declines in local attendance at its parks in both Sydney and the Gold Coast.

Prior to the tragedy at the park operated by rival Ardent Leisure ticket sales had remained solid, and while international and interstate visitors are in line with the previous year, "attendance by the local Queensland market which previously represented approximately 60% of attendees, has declined by more than 12% on the prior year.

"Wet'n'Wild Sydney appears to have been similarly affected by the incident," the company said.

While ticket revenues have only been minimally impacted, there has been a corresponding decline in food and beverage, retail and other in-park revenue.

## Passport-less border

**THE** introduction of biometric capture technology at Australia's international airports and sea ports later this year, exclusively revealed by *Travel Daily* (TD 04 Jan), would make displaying a passport a thing of the past for up to 90% of travellers.

Facial recognition, iris and/or fingerprint scanning would enable the bulk of travellers to be processed automatically by 2020, eliminating paperwork by staff, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton told the *ABC* yesterday.

"In many cases that will mean people, whilst they'll still have to carry their passport, may not need to present their passport at all in the long term," Dutton said.

"But in the immediate term, this will make it easier, it will make it quicker, for people going in and out of our airport."

Reducing processing time will likely boost tourism, he added.

Canberra Airport will be the first location to trial the new tech.



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## Sunshine Coast eyes Singapore

**QUEENSLAND'S** Sunshine Coast is expecting a flurry of new international visitors over the next few years, following the completion of its \$360m airport development which is slated for 2020, according to Visit Sunshine Coast chief executive officer Simon Latchford.

Latchford, who on Fri described the airport as a "game changer" for the region, revealed he was currently in talks with Singapore Airlines' subsidiary Scoot to operate direct flights to the Sunshine Coast.

"Thirty-six months or thereabouts we'll be able to have meaningful conversations with other international airlines to commence services sooner rather than later," he said.

He expected a line of Virgin Australia flight schedules would be "slightly rejigged" to match up with inbound partners such as Singapore Airlines and Scoot.

"These subtle changes will allow people to do direct transfers out of Sydney and Melbourne into the Sunshine Coast Airport," said Latchford.

Instead of going after 50,000 overnight visitors from mainland China, Latchford said Singapore "would be the ideal Asian market" to target.

"It will also provide our stakeholders a period of time to get used to different markets," he said.

In line with the region's international push, a Singapore-based office headed up by former trade and international manager Rachel Meyer has been established to promote the region (TD 05 Jan).

"We crawl before we walk before we run...I suggest everyone watch this space," he concluded.

For more from Visit Sunshine Coast see **page eight**.





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- **Sydney** 8 February
- **Brisbane** 9 February

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# Visit California marketing push

**THE** 'Golden State' of America will plough its largest ever investment into the Australian market in an effort to drive more people to the state of California.

Unveiled on Thu and rolling out from today, the US state's tourism office, Visit California is spending \$5.6 million in brand awareness globally this year, taking the form of TV, digital & out-of-home advertising, PR & marketing activity.

Australia is after all, California's third largest overseas market by visitor volume, with arrivals tipped to rise 3% this year on top of the 638,000 that are estimated to have visited the state last year.

Visit California president & ceo Caroline Beteta said the funding injection aimed to keep California top of mind with Aussie travellers.

A double-barrelled campaign spearheads the promotion, with two new TV spots, 'Living the Dream' and 'Kidifornia'.

Airing in Melbourne, Brisbane & Sydney, 'Living the Dream' features a kaleidoscope of celebs, sports stars and personalities, enticing audiences of all ages to follow their dreams to California.

'Kidifornia' will run online, showcasing the west coast state as a premier family travel destination.

Visit California's in-market

campaign will run until 11 Apr.

Throughout the month of Mar, Qantas will be the exclusive air partner of digital executions, with the Red Roo promoting its new 787-9 *Dreamliner* service from Melbourne to LAX across its own marketing and social channels, including in-flight media.

## Timeshare warning

**CONSUMER** group CHOICE is urging Aussie travellers to think twice about timeshare holidays, warning people they could cost 115% more than booking accommodation directly.

In a 272-page submission to the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, CHOICE insists the regulator force operators of timeshare businesses to show greater transparency to their schemes.

"These lifestyle companies tout timeshare as a good option for your annual holiday. But after we crunched the numbers we found they were little more than modern day money pits," CHOICE head of policy, Erin Turner said.

Turner said operators were "masking the real costs" of timeshare organisations, which included additional ad hoc fees for housekeeping and service costs.

## EtihaD doubles DUS

**ETIHAD** Airways has increased frequencies on between Adu Dhabi and Dusseldorf, introducing a new second daily service on the route starting 26 Mar.

## Cali brings out the big guns!

**VISIT** California gave industry partners a preview of its new TV spots (see left) at a yoga breakfast event held last Thu.

Body Mind Life yoga school teacher Kate Dambach trained a travel troupe in few moves during the session.

Among those taking part were executives from Disney, Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board, Beverly Hills and Visit California.

**Pictured** at the morning workout are *Bachelor* star, fitness influencer and friend of California Tim Robards with Disney's Tory Martin, marketing & pr manager and David Clark, head of travel and biz development.



## Queenstown surge

**AIR** New Zealand is reporting having carried 1 million domestic passengers on flights to and from Queenstown Airport in 2016 for the first time ever.

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## Start your engines for NTIA '17



**ABOVE:** AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury joined with Vanessa Hudson and Rob Harrison from Qantas this morning to formally launch the 2017 National Travel Industry Awards (see p1).

The trio is pictured at Qantas HQ in Sydney, with Westbury quipping that hosting NTIA 2017 at the larger ICC Sydney meant "guests will enjoy extra legroom".

### China-Cairns boost?

**CAIRNS** is a step towards securing new flights from China following meetings between an Australian aviation delegations and a Chinese airline last week.

Tourism Minister Kate Jones said the meetings follow last month's reveal that Cairns will receive the first funding under the \$33.5 million Connecting with Asia fund.

### Win a new Fitbit!

**TRAVEL Daily** and *travelBulletin* have today launched our newest travel industry survey, seeking feedback on agent experience selling touring, rail and car hire.

The study is being conducted independently by Stollznow Market Research, and those who complete the 5-10 minute poll have the opportunity to win a Fitbit and movie vouchers.

The de-identified results will be published in upcoming editions of **Travel Daily** and *travelBulletin*, to give the industry an overarching view of the land based sectors.

To access the survey **CLICK HERE**.

### Tunisia update

**THE** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has updated its Smartraveller advice for Tunisia, where the government has extended the current state of emergency until 19 Feb 2017.

Australians are advised to reconsider their need to travel to Tunisia due to terrorism threats.

### Alitalia, Hainan pact

**ITALIAN** flag carrier Alitalia has announced a new reciprocal codeshare deal with Hainan Airlines, covering flights between China and Italy plus domestic routes in both countries.

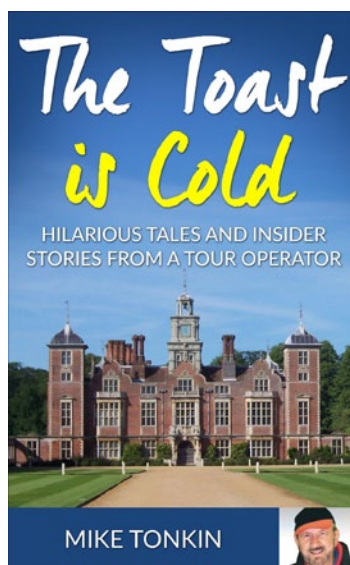
### The toast is cold!

**MICHAEL** Tonkin from Eastern Europe Travel has released a new book lifting the lid on group tours.

*The Toast is Cold - Hilarious Tales and Insider Stories from a Tour Operator* is currently available as an e-book download for just US\$0.99 on the Amazon website.

"I'll tell you about a few mistakes I made in the beginning, but then it's about the people, hotels, guides, drivers, dramas and how I dealt with them," Tonkin promises, as well as describing some of the 5% of guests who were "sometimes a challenge".

For more info see [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).



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## Akeroyd ATMC pres

**CARLSON** Wagonlit Travel managing director for Australia and NZ, Lisa Akeroyd, has been appointed as president of the Association of Travel Management Companies.

Akeroyd takes over the role effective immediately from previous ATMC president Craig Smith of Corporate Travel Management, who has led the organisation for over nine years.

## USTA Trump welcome

**ROGER** Dow, president and ceo of the US Travel Association, has welcomed President Trump to the White House, issuing a statement over the weekend highlighting "a number of issues for which the American travel community shares his enthusiasm".

These include infrastructure, domestic jobs and the US trade balance, Dow said, as well as the state of America's airports.

Dow said the US travel sector stood ready to work with the new administration on matters pertaining to travel security and the U.S. entry process.

"Maintaining an efficient travel system capable of detecting threats in a changing global environment is a continued priority for us," Dow said.

He also hailed Trump's business and hospitality background, and said the US travel industry would be a "capable, willing partner" to the new president.

## TNZ drive campaigns

**TOURISM** New Zealand has kicked off two new social media campaigns for the North Island targeting Chinese visitors who will be arriving during the Chinese New Year period.

The key message is that driving in New Zealand is different from driving in China; that it can be challenging; and there can be tragic consequences if mistakes are made.

The campaign supports the work of the New Zealand Transport Agency whose road safety campaign is focused on the South Island.

## Tianjin Airlines plots MEL flights

**YET** another Chinese carrier has set its sights on expansion in Australian skies, with Tianjin Airlines loading schedules for a planned Chongqing-Melbourne route to debut in Sep 2017.

It will be the first Australian service for Tianjin Airlines, which last month began operations from Tianjin to Auckland via Chongqing.

GDS displays indicate the new A330-200 Melbourne service will operate three times per week.

Reservations for the new route are not yet open.

## TA set to build on Virtuoso pact

**TOURISM** Australia is continuing its push for wealthy American tourists, with a target of 500 Aussie Specialists within the US Virtuoso network to be announced in New York this week by trade minister Steve Ciobo.

TA and Virtuoso first kicked off their partnership about 18 months ago (**TD** 11 Aug 15), and Ciobo told the *Financial Review* he was confident the initiative would boost visitor spending.

Virtuoso's Matthew Upchurch said the aim was to have an Aussie Specialist within every Virtuoso agency in the US with ten or more advisers on staff.

A new joint promotional campaign will be announced at the G'Day USA launch tomorrow.

## AccorHotel appoints

**ACCORHOTELS** has promoted Louise Daley to be its new deputy chief executive officer Asia Pacific.

Daley has been with the company for 26 years, working across several different positions including cfo for AccorHotels Pacific and ceo of AccorPlus.

In her new role she will retain her current responsibilities as cfo and will also continue to oversee AccorPlus, Accor Vacation Club and concierge services.

## Laos precautions

**SMARTTRAVELLER** is advising Australians to choose air travel, rather than road travel between Luang Prabang and Vang Vieng in Laos due to an increase in "violent opportunistic crime" in the area including muggings with guns and knives.

## Scenic's 2016 stars shine



**DOZENS** of agents were honoured by Scenic last Saturday evening at its "Night of Stars" held at Sydney's Ivy Ballroom.

An ice theme reflected strong sales of polar cruises ahead of the launch of the new *Scenic Eclipse*

currently under construction in Croatia, giving guests a chance to ignore the summer heat outside.

The ACT's Weston Cruise & Travel was named top-selling agency for 2016, while the year's top Australian

consultant was Kylie Cameron from helloworld Miranda in NSW.

Fourteen agencies were awarded Scenic's "Diamond Status", having each achieved

sales of more than \$1 million over the course of the year.

**Pictured** above at the event are Scenic acting gm sales and marketing Liz Glover, left, and executive gm Aleisha Fittler.

Also enjoying the festivities



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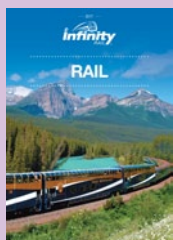






## Brochures

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



### Infinity Holidays - Rail 2017

Rail adventures across the United Kingdom, Europe, Canada, USA, The Americas, Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Africa are packed into Infinity Holidays' 2017 Rail brochure. The new release covers what to expect on board, the highlights in each location, escorted journeys and pre-tour cruise options in Canada. Information on rail passes and point-to-point journeys is also included.



### Travelmarvel - Europe River Cruising preview 2018

Travelmarvel's just-released Europe River Cruising, Featuring Land & Rail Journeys 2018 preview brochure includes extra departures for Portugal and Russia. New land and cruise combinations have been added including Italy, and a Great Rail Journey from Oslo to Kiruna in Sweden to see the northern lights. Two new ships, the *MS Douro Serenity* and the *MS Alexander Borodin* will join the Travelmarvel fleet in

2018. The most popular itinerary in the program remains the 15-day European Gems cruise from Amsterdam to Budapest.



### Venture Holidays - America, Hawaii & Canada 17/18

New England has made its debut in this new release, packed into a new escorted coach tour and suggested self-drive itinerary. The 13 day self-drive itinerary covers the landscape of Crater Lake National Park to the quirky city of Portland with its artisan breweries and food trucks. Tours departing from Las Vegas exploring the states of Arizona and Utah have been introduced, including a music pilgrimage through

Tennessee visiting Memphis & Nashville and a nine-day escorted coach tour visiting Atlanta, Charleston, Savannah and New Orleans.



### AAT Kings - Australia & NZ Short Breaks 2017/18

A total of 60 short holidays ranging between two and seven days in length and venturing throughout Australia and New Zealand have been packed into AAT King's latest brochure. New to 2017 are Family Shindig holidays to Uluru and New Zealand, featuring many departures during school holidays and experiences to keep the whole family happy. The four-day Uluru Family Shindig itinerary includes the opportunity to take part in a wildlife conservation project, dot-paint with a local Anangu artist and toast to the Uluru sunset.



### Insider Journeys - Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia 17/18

Insider Journeys' 92-page guide features a range of private itineraries, small boat river cruising, small group journeys, city tour and accommodation options across Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Highlights include the lesser known cities of Nha Trang, Ninh Binh, Mai Chau, Ha Giang, Battambang, Monduliri, Kratie, Bolaven Plateau, Champasak and Si Phan Don, along with unique stays in eco lodges and homestays and a section dedicated to luxury Mekong river cruising. The brochure is designed to allow agents to custom design a holiday for their client.

*Travel Daily* is Australia's leading travel industry publication.

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# Travel Daily

First with the news

Monday 23rd January 2017

## Sunshine Coast turns 50

A YEAR long calendar of events has been planned for the Sunshine Coast in celebration of its 50th birthday.

Attractions confirmed for the milestone anniversary include Wanderlust, the Horizon Festival of Arts and Culture and the launch

of a web-based Food Trail which allows visitors to discover the region's 'paddock-to-plate' food experience.

Visit Sunshine Coast chief executive officer Simon Latchford said that the region's diversity of attractions was providing the momentum for tourism growth across the region.

"Caloundra, Maroochydore, Mooloolaba and Noosa have been established for many decades as some of Australia's favourite beach destinations, but what has been particularly

encouraging in recent years is the growth in popularity of our Hinterland attractions," he said.

"We're looking forward to record tourist arrivals in 2017, with both new and returning visitors invited to join in the celebrations for our 50th anniversary," Latchford added.

**Pictured** in Sydney at a media event last Fri are, from left: Simon Latchford, ceo, Visit Sunshine Coast; Liz Tuckett, PR & communications, Visit Sunshine Coast; and Peter Hook, director, Hook Communications.



## Tour, Rail & Car Hire Study

FitBit Charge 2 and  
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Travel Daily

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Are you working in a sales role but on a low base? Want to have security of a high base salary plus a very strong incentive scheme? If you consider yourself a consummate professional in sales, preferably with TMC sales, we have 2 new roles available with two of the most highly regarded Global TMCs in the business. Targeting SME & large market accounts across the AUS/NZ market, you must be driven by winning new business and achieving targets.

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**BUILD THE BUSINESS**

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This well-known travel management company is looking for a highly skilled corporate sales manager to prospect & grow their corporate client base. Use your extensive experience to build relationships with prospects, build a pipeline, present, negotiate & win new business. A great salary package + incentive structure is on offer. If you have previous corporate travel management sales experience & are a true hunter we want to hear from you.

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**An entire day dedicated to personal development for females.**

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## SPEAKERS



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Managing Director  
Spencer Travel



**Jennifer Vandekreeke**  
Vice President ANZ  
Carnival Cruise



**Alex O'Connor**  
Managing Director  
Insight Vacations



**Anna Guillan**  
Regional Director  
Sales & Marketing  
One&Only



**Turia Pitt**  
Motivational  
Speaker



**Michelle Beveridge**  
CIO  
Intrepid Group



**Kaylene Shuttlewood**  
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**Laura Ruffles**  
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