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FC 'virtual contact centre'

FLIGHT Centre has signed a new telecommunications agreement with Optus, with the deal set to see the agency group move to a "virtualised contact centre" over the next twelve months.

The \$75 million, five-year pact, will see Flight Centre transition its existing contact centres to a cloud-based solution called the Optus CCaaS (call-centre-as-a-service) which is said to enable the company to "increase its focus and resources to boost customer experience, improve staff management and other service offerings," according to Optus.

Flight Centre chief operating officer, Melanie Waters-Ryan, said "With the rapid pace of change both within our industry and in technology, Flight Centre has had to consistently change and keep raising the bar and value to our customers.

"Building on our successful partnership with Optus, we are delighted to be investing in our critical technology platforms and capability to deliver a great service for our customers in Australia, in the retail stores,

online and contact centres."

As well as the CCaaS system, the contract will support wider Flight Centre business objectives, including global security, mobility, and expansion of data connectivity, as well as "unified communications and collaboration services to more than 1,150 stores and 9,000 staff throughout Australia".

The enhanced technology will enable Flight Centre to offer its customers a range of options to arrange and manage their travel, including email and web chat, interactive voice response, speech recognition and courtesy call backs.

Flight Centre has been running its communications systems with Optus Business for more than a decade, sticking with the long term relationship following a competitive tender process.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news and photos plus full pages from:

- inPlace Recruitment
- Club Med

EK to EWR via Athens

EMIRATES has announced the launch of a new daily transatlantic service, operating from Dubai to New York's Newark Liberty Airport via Athens.

The new route will debut on 12 Mar 2017, complementing EK's existing four daily non-stop services between Dubai and New York JFK.

The Athens-EWR leg will also provide the only year-round non-stop daily service between the USA and Greece.

EK president Tim Clark said the Greek government had approached the carrier some time ago to consider the route between Athens and New York.

"We are pleased to be able to help meet a strong consumer need long neglected by other airlines," he said.

Club Med pre-regos

PRE-REGISTRATIONS are being taken for Club Med's new ski resorts in Tomamu, Japan and Grand Massif Samoëse, France.

Club Med has also released a seven-night Balinese package to Bali in partnership with Garuda priced from \$1,680pp - see **pg 8**.

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Travel Daily

First with the news

Tuesday 24th January 2017



#HelloSabah
Sepilok, Sandakan

Be in it to win it

DON'T forget to give us your opinions in the inaugural **Travel Daily/travelBulletin** Tour, Rail and Car Hire survey which is currently open for industry participation.

Information submitted via the independent survey is completely confidential, with the results set to look at agent perception of products and suppliers across the touring and land sectors.

Participants who complete the 5-10 minute survey will be in the running to win Event Cinemas tickets and a Fitbit - click below.

[Click for touring survey](#)

Sorry Michael!

THANKS to all the readers who pointed out that budding author Mike Tonkin is from Eastern Europe Travel (**TD** yesterday).

The **Travel Daily** edition received by some of our subscribers incorrectly stated that he was from Beyond Travel.

AFTA acts on All Leisure

AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury will engage with his counterparts in the UK in the coming weeks to see whether there is anything further that can be done for Australian agents caught up in the collapse of All Leisure Group earlier this month (**TD** 05 Jan).

The failure of the company, which operated Swan Hellenic and Voyages of Discovery cruises, reportedly disrupted the travel plans of more than 13,000 people.

However British travellers were protected by the All Leisure Group ATOL (Air Travel Organiser's Licence), meaning customers with bookings involving flights were able to claim a full refund for their trip.

Cruise-only bookings were not protected by the ATOL system, but the UK Civil Aviation Administration said these might be covered by the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA), if

booked via an ABTA travel agent.

ABTA said about a third of the future bookings were UK departing cruises that were covered by its financial protection scheme for British travel agents.

Australian travellers are however not covered by ATOL or ABTA and mainstream media has highlighted the impact of the collapse, with one couple losing more than \$37,000.

Writing in his exclusive **Travel Daily** column today (see page 6), Westbury said "there is a lot more to this story than has reached our shores".

He confirmed AFTA was in dialog with ABTA about what might be possible to mitigate the impact of the All Leisure collapse.

"I am hopeful that by working with ABTA and the UK authorities we may be able to get a better outcome than I expect might otherwise be the case," he said.

QF/KQ cargo deal

QANTAS has struck a new cargo deal with Kenya Airways, billed by KQ as a "major game changer" in terms of trade exports.

The pact could be seen as a precursor to mooted direct flights by Kenya Airways between Nairobi and Australia using Boeing 787-8 *Dreamliner*, previously flagged to begin this year (**TD** 01 Jun 12).

MEANWHILE, KQ is celebrating 40 years of operation, with fares now on sale across its network when booked before 05 Feb.

The promotion includes a buy one Business class fare, get one 50% off the second.

Tonga Tourism chief

FEKITAMOELOA Katoa

'Utoikamanu has been named as the new ceo of the Ministry of Tourism in Tonga.

Mrs 'Utoikamanu, appointed for a four year term, is a Tongan public servant and a former ambassador to the United Nations.

Chinese New Year Sale

It's the Year of the Rooster

Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing all on Sale

Visit qantas.com/agents to find out more.

*Sale ends 23:59 (AEDT) 31 January 2017, unless sold out prior. Conditions apply.



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BREAKAWAY **SILVERSEA**
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24 APR 17 – Silver Whisper – 9 Nights Athens to Monte Carlo.
Fr \$6,350* **\$2,725*** pp Aud inc taxes & port charges
*Conditions apply.

CLICK HERE for further details

Summit speakers

MUMBRELLA has announced the speaker line-up for its upcoming Travel Marketing Summit, with brand marketers, agencies and travel experts set to share their knowledge in a series of discussions and debates.

Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism marketing director Rowan Worner will discuss the NZ city's earthquake response, while Rail Plus commercial director Ingrid Kocijan will talk on the wholesaler's work after last year's terror attacks in France.

The event will be held at the Four Seasons Sydney on 05 Apr.

For more details and the full speaker line-up, **CLICK HERE**.

BER delayed again

THE official opening of Berlin Brandenburg Airport is expected to be pushed back again after the discovery of new technical faults with control systems in terminal doors, German news agency *dpa* is reporting.

Originally scheduled to debut in 2011, BER is now likely to begin operation in 2018, the city's mayor Michael Muller has said.

Marriott room record

MARRIOTT International opened a record number of rooms during 2016, its strongest year of growth.

The group yesterday announced it had added 55,000 hotel rooms during the year, excluding the 381,000 it gained from its acquisition of Starwood.

The combined group signed deals for 880 new hotels during 2016 and added 400 properties.

Marriott now operates or franchises more than 6,000 hotels and nearly 1.2 million rooms.

"2016 will go down as a remarkable year in Marriott's history," said president and ceo Arne Sorenson.

"Our accomplishments this year position Marriott for continued success and create greater opportunities for our guests, associates, development partners, shareholders and the communities where we do business," he said.

The group is planning to build a US\$600 million headquarters at Bethesda in the US state of Maryland as a base for its expanding workforce, including a 200-room Marriott hotel.

Lamingtons on QF

AUSTRALIA Day travellers will be able to get their sugar hit in true Aussie style aboard Qantas flights this Thu.

Lamingtons from Simone Logue will be served to Business class passengers on domestic and international flights, while Tim Tams will be offered to domestic Economy customers.

International Premium Economy customers will be offered Tim Tams or Caramello Koalas.

MEANWHILE, Travelodge Hotels has announced it will offer Tim Tam Toast at three hotels on Australia Day.

The hotel group has created a Tim Tam-infused chocolate spread, to be offered at breakfast at Travelodge Wynyard in Sydney, Travelodge Perth and Travelodge Docklands, Melbourne.

O'Leary jumps ship

FORMER Creative Cruising executive Michael O'Leary has joined Donna Barlow Travel as group general manager.

O'Leary told **TD** he would be responsible for implementing a strategic business plan he had been working on with Donna and Brian Meads-Barlow over recent months, covering the corporate, leisure and cruise businesses while also supporting the home-based "I Love Cruising" concept. O'Leary has more than 30 years' experience in the corporate, retail, wholesale and franchise travel sectors.



Window Seat

ORGANISERS of the Australian Open are pioneering the latest in court-side hospitality this year, with new front row seats installed for VVIPs.

Hosted by APT at the Grand Slam yesterday, **Travel Daily** viewed the new-front row seats which appear to be similar to a cinema-style padded chair and sponsored by Emirates (**below**).

The new platinum experience consists of up to 12 seats, and includes food, drinks plus a private security guard to escort guests to their seat.

According to *Fairfax*, there are still limited seats available at this year's event, with prices for the experience at the Men's Final selling for \$22,500 - bargain!



BA wields chopsticks

BRITISH Airways will introduce green tea, chopsticks and slippers on its China flights ahead of Chinese New Year.

Other touches include bilingual menu cards and dishes like Kung Pao chicken & pork wonton soup.



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More Marriotts for Australia?



MINISTER for Trade, Tourism & Investment Steven Ciobo met with Marriott International president and ceo Arne Sorenson while at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland last week.

Ciobo (pictured left) said on Twitter the talks with Sorenson included "hearing their plans for more Aussie hotels".

Cousteau on Crystal

JEAN-MICHEL Cousteau, the son of ocean filmmaker, explorer and conservationist Jacques Cousteau will join Crystal Cruises' voyages aboard *Crystal Serenity* on 24 May & 27 Oct and aboard *Crystal Esprit* on 19 Nov.

New Phuket branding

PHUKET Hotels Association revealed its new 'Brand Phuket' identity during the annual Thailand Tourism Forum, held at the InterContinental Bangkok.

Created by Bangkok-based global branding agency QUO, the new brand focuses on the island's natural beauty and culturally diverse communities.

"It is critical that the island's attractions are harnessed under one umbrella," ceo of QUO David Keen said.

He said the team had formed a "memorable identity" that would bring about "a stronger desire for the destination".

Tapestry debuts

HILTON Hotels has this week marked the launch of its 14th brand following the debut of Tapestry Collection by Hilton.

The upscale label is positioned just below Curio - A Collection by Hilton and is being marketed as a "vibrant new brand that offers guests a refreshing choice for an independent hotel stay".

Seven US hotels have already penned letters of intent with the collection in the following cities: Syracuse, Chicago, Nashville, Warren, Hampton and two in Indianapolis.

JNTO event wait list

THE Japan National Tourism Organisation's 'Japan Endless Discover Seminar' held in Sydney on 07 Feb has reached capacity.

Registrations are now being accepted on a wait list only basis. RSVPs for the 09 Feb Brisbane session are still being accepted.

It will run from 5pm to 8:30pm at the Brisbane Town Hall - **CLICK HERE** to register your attendance.

Avianca into BSP

BRAZILIAN Star Alliance member Avianca Airlines (O6) has joined IATA's Billing and Settlement Plan (BSP) in Australia and New Zealand.

Represented by APG, the carrier is paying zero base commission.

Beirman tourism ideas

SENIOR lecturer in tourism at the University of Technology Sydney David Beirman has told the ABC that Sydney needs more hotels, cruise ports and jobs to support tourism.

"When we're doing such a great job in tourism to attract people, we need to make sure we have the infrastructure to cater for them," he said.

His suggestions included a high speed rail link between Melbourne and Sydney, more accom for business travellers and more local tourism professionals.

Air NZ app milestone

AIR New Zealand's mobile app has proved popular with customers, clocking up 1 million downloads and 2 million coffee orders, with the carrier saying the app would only continue to evolve and develop.

Cuba travel biz jumps

LGC Capital has announced that its Cuba focused travel and concierge business InCloud 9 has almost doubled in size over the last year - increasing its turnover to an unaudited C\$1.36 million for the year ending 30 Sep.

The company is seeing a marked increase in new business for group tours and conferences as well as private jets and yachting.

Trendsetter

Travel & Cruise Centre



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Senior Retail Sales Consultant

Lower North Shore - Virtuoso Agency

Are you a travel consultant who regularly sells to high net worth clients and would like to work within a Virtuoso agency? Trendsetter Travel & Cruise Centre, with stores in Lane Cove and Northwood/Longueville, will celebrate 25 years in business in 2017 and is looking for another consultant to join our team. The successful applicant will be self-motivated and well-organised, have superior presentation and sales skills and enjoy selling to a diverse client base. An extensive cruise knowledge is essential and preference will be given to a candidate who can work full time. Please contact David Cooper on 0413 010 638 for initial enquiries.

tigerair

Agency Support Coordinator

We fly people not just planes and we know that having the right people on board at team Tigerair is critical to achieving our goal of becoming Australia's number one choice for value air travel.

We're looking for an Agency Support Coordinator to join the Commercial Team based at our Melbourne Office.

Reporting to the Sales Manager, you will be the primary contact for travel agencies, assisting with a broad range of functions and day to day queries to ensure our agency partners have a seamless experience.

For more information on the role, please refer to our careers page: <https://tigerair.com.au/corporate/careers>

Tuesday 24th January 2017

Swan River flights

A **NEW** adventure tourism company has launched in Western Australia, offering return day trips from Perth to Margaret River in a seaplane.

Swan River Seaplanes are capable of carrying 12 guests at a time on the flights, which take in scenic views at low altitude before passengers disembark at winery tours and attractions at Margaret River.

Day trips with Swan River Seaplanes start from \$795.

CLICK HERE for more info.

G Adventures brox

G ADVENTURES' new 2017 Marine brochure which details new sailing adventures and old favourites such as river and expedition cruising will be hitting stores shortly.

A new Indonesian trip explores the coastlines of Bali and Lombok, visiting the Gili Islands, Lembongan, Nusa Penida and Gili Gede and includes snorkelling excursions, kayaking tours, beachfront bars and yoga sessions plus three meals a day.

A fresh eight-day tour of Montenegro begins in Croatia, sailing along the Dalmatian Coast.

Directors' Russia tour

SPACES on Travel Directors' escorted 19-day Kamchatka: Nature's Tour De Force itinerary are filling up fast, the firm says.

Only a few spots remain for 2017 and departures for the Jul 2018 tour are selling quickly, said the group's market development manager Alison Osborne.

The itinerary begins in Seoul, South Korea before travellers are flown to Russia's Vladivostok.

It culminates in Kamchatka Peninsula where there is a visit to capital Petropavlovsk and explorations of Kamchatka's National Parks.

View the full program **HERE**.

US ID crackdown

US RESIDENTS of Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Oklahoma & Washington will no longer be able to fly domestically using their driver's licences as ID from next year.

Instead, travellers from those nine states will be required to use alternate forms of ID such as a passport, military ID or permanent resident card to pass TSA security check points.

New rules apply from 22 Jan 18.

Go wild in Africa or explore other adventure destinations in the February issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK HERE to read **travelBulletin**



Air Canada Xmas comp winner

WHY CHOOSE...WHEN YOU CAN HAVE BOTH?



CONGRATULATIONS to helloworld Stockton Nowra's Brittany Pont for taking out the top prize in Air Canada's Christmas competition.

Travel Daily was inundated with creative entries this year, but Brittany's delectable entry (pictured left) was handpicked as the creme de la creme by a panel of Air Canada judges.

Brittany has won two Economy return tickets to New York flying Air Canada via Vancouver and two CityPASSes to explore the Big Apple's many attractions.

Local Measure expand

SYDNEY-BASED tech company Local Measure has successfully raised \$4.5m in funding to fuel its global expansion plans.

"We are pleased to announce the completion of this capital raise and look forward to another year of substantial growth," said founder and chief executive officer Jonathan Barouch.

The company provides a platform which merges content, social media and mobile tech to provide the hospitality and tourism industry with access to customer data and analytics.

New offices will open in Dubai and LA later this quarter.

AC revamps website

AIR Canada has overhauled its website, this week officially launching a refreshed look.

Features of the new site include real time operational information such as flight status and travel updates, online tools where customers can quickly and easily check-in, and access to a self-service re-booking tool.

The carrier has also streamlined its booking process by eliminating around half of the steps usually required to buy a fare.

Customers can view the website in seven different languages.

To experience the revamped site, visit www.aircanada.com.



ROCKY MOUNTAINEER

Managing Director Sales, Asia Pacific

Rocky Mountaineer is seeking an experienced travel sales professional to join our global leadership team as Managing Director Sales, Asia Pacific.

The successful candidate will be responsible for leading our passionate team of sales professionals in Australia and New Zealand to achieve continued growth together with our valued trade partners. Additionally the MD APAC will be responsible for structuring and leading Rocky Mountaineer's expanded distribution throughout Asia.

Interested candidates should demonstrate a proven track record of delivering extraordinary growth through inspiring successful teams and trade partnerships.

For further details on this exciting leadership opportunity please visit www.rockymountaineer.com/careers

Please note that the deadline for applications is January 30, 2017.

Platinum
TRAVEL CORPORATION

Multi-skilled Corporate Consultant - Brisbane office

Platinum Travel Corporation has started 2017 off with a bang!

New business wins and a new office doubling capacity, our new CBD premises is located at 370 Queen Street, Brisbane.

We are now seeking applicants for a multi-skilled corporate consultant to join our growing Brisbane team, with an immediate start.

The successful candidate will ideally have a minimum 3 years corporate consulting experience in Australia, fares and ticketing knowledge (essential), and preference will be given to those applicants with Amadeus and Tramada experience.

Check out our website to learn more about our amazing travel company www.platinumtravelcorp.com

If you are looking for a new start in 2017 please contact hr@platinumtravelcorp.com



WELCOME to 2017 and my first column for *Travel Daily* for the year. For me it has been a long summer break and as the feet land under the desk it seems that we will be starting the year with a drama.

The collapse of the All Leisure Group in the UK is definitely not the Christmas present that the industry needed. There is a lot more to this story than has reached our shores and like most things AFTA we will not just accept what has happened and leave both the Aussie consumers and Australian travel agents in the dark.

We have already engaged with our sister organisation in the UK ABTA and are in dialogue with them about what might be possible to help compensate those impacted. As most would be aware ABTA do operate a compensation scheme. The challenge is that the scheme is designed for UK citizens. The situation that has presented itself does leave many questions to be asked about how to best protect yourself as a travel agent from supplier collapse (we have had so many of these over the years) and of course how the consumer is best placed to protect themselves against companies going under.

There is no simple single bullet to be fired, it is just not that easy and there is no system in the world that resolves everyone's situation. That said, I am hopeful that by working with ABTA and the UK authorities we may be able to get a better outcome than I expect might otherwise be the case. I will be meeting face to face with ABTA in the coming weeks to see what we can do to help support those travel agents that once again ended up in the middle of this shemozzle.

As I have mentioned before, the AFTA is looking to find a more appropriate solution for travel agents when they find themselves in this situation and faced with the chargebacks and we hope to be able to bring this solution to life this year. In the meantime, I hope 2017 proves to be a great year for travel and that everyone goes on to have great success.

A final note, NTIA 2017 has opened for nominations this week and as with each year I am sure NTIA fever will take hold. We have a big line up of categories this year and the event itself will be at the next level of events with the newly completed International Convention Centre Sydney being our venue for 2017. Good luck to all those who choose to take part in the process.

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VietJet SIN link

VIETJET Air is introducing an extra service from Hanoi to Singapore from late Apr, according to GDS displays.

The twice daily route will be serviced by A320 aircraft.

Williamsburg opens

THE eight story Williamsburg Hotel has opened its doors in the heart of Brooklyn, New York.

The hotel's debut will occur in phases with first phase revealing a lobby bar and guest rooms.

In the northern winter, the second phase will see the debut of Harvey Restaurant, a rooftop pool, water tower bar & ballroom.

Disney ups Marvel

DISNEY Cruise Line has expanded its Marvel Day at Sea to include select *Disney Magic* sailings from Miami in 2018.

The event features all-day entertainment including interactions with Marvel Super Heroes, a deck party, Marvel-themed youth activities, special merchandise and unique food and beverage offerings.

Tas FireLight Festival

THE Tasmanian Govt has agreed to pump \$40,000 into the state's three night FireLight Festival.

The laser and light show from 04 to 06 May will illuminate the face of the iconic Mt Roland.

The economic benefits of the Festival to the region will be a welcome boost, as the event falls outside the peak tourist season.



Money

WELCOME to *Money*, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

\$1AUD = US0.755

THE Aussie dollar increased overnight compared to the US dollar as it climbed up 0.3% and returned to a two month high.

The Aussie dollar was weaker in other markets with the largest losses seen in AUD/GBP, down 0.8%, and the AUD/JPY, dropping 1.0%. The currency also saw significant losses versus the New Zealand dollar.

Meanwhile, the US dollar lost ground sharply overnight as the first week of the new US administration saw markets watch and wait for new economic policies.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.755
UK	£0.604
NZ	\$1.040
Euro	€0.703
Japan	¥85.33
Thailand	฿26.50
China	¥5.123
South Africa	R10.148
Canada	\$0.997
Crude oil	US\$52.42



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Sydney CBD

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- Global Airline
- Account mgt/BDM mix

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Groups Consultant

Sydney CBD

Salary \$50K + super

Want to work for a travel company that has excellent staff retention & great benefits to keep the team rewarded educated and focused on growing their careers? You will be responsible for this ongoing, dedicated project for special interest groups for large global events. Must have groups experience in Wholesale or Corporate with GDS experience preferably Galileo.

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- Great career progression

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Retail Travel Consultant

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Above average salary + famils galore!

Offering multiple benefits and business stability this agency boasts affluent clients who travel to world wide destinations. Due to business growth they are expanding and seeking a passionate consultant, strong in customer service to sell world wide destinations. With annual conferences, loads of famils, your birthday off and no weekends....this opportunity is too good to pass up!

- Work close to home
- Amadeus/Travelog ideal

Call Susan or [click here](#)

Air Desk Consultant

Sydney CBD

Competitive salary with excellent benefits

As the air expert, you will oversee all air product negotiation and distribution. Quality control will also be a part of your role and providing training on accurate fare information for the sales staff. This brand has a solid reputation with nearly a century of operation behind them. With a wide variety of set departure tours & the ability to custom design itineraries you cant go wrong with this brand!

- Excellent benefits
- Stable company

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Senior Account Manager

Sydney city fringe, \$70K + super + incentives

A newly created role to provide an improved level of client support within this national corporate/ event business. Manage the retention & development of new & existing clients. Previous sales/ AM exp. required.


Call Ben or [click here](#)

Sales Executive

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club med tomamu
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