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## THL profit hit by US slump

**NZ-LISTED** Tourism Holdings Limited this morning declared a 26% decline in underlying annual profit, with a record performance of its NZ motorhome rentals and sales business overshadowed by a poor performance in the USA.

Total revenue was flat at NZ\$423m for the year, and the company's net profit after tax plummeted 52% to \$29.8 million.

However last year's \$63m result included a one-off \$23.1 million gain relating to the formation of TH2, the company's joint venture with RV maker Thor Industries, which also owns local businesses Roadtrippers, GoSeeAustralia and Outdoria (**TD 09 Apr**).

### Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today has seven pages of news and photos, a front cover page for **Inspiring Vacations**, plus full pages from:

- TMS Talent
- Singapore Airlines jobs

TH2 has also been rebranded as Togo Group, the company said.

Chairman Rob Campbell said "the Board is not satisfied with the result for FY19...[however] we remain very confident in the future of the business and our competitive position".

THL businesses feature a range of motorhome brands such as Maui, Britz, El Monte RV and Road Bear, alongside experiences including Waitomo Glowworm Caves and the Kiwi Experience NZ hop on hop off bus network.

The company's CEO, Grant Webster cited record results in Australia, along with strong growth in the NZ rentals and sales business, with the overall result impacted by a 34% decline in sales of vehicles in the USA.

The company's sustainability focus has also seen it today announce the commencement of a journey to become a "Future-Fit Business" - **CLICK HERE** for more.

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## HA better for Best

HAWAIIAN Airlines has appointed Andrew Best as Head of Industry Sales Australia.

Best has been with the carrier for just over three years as National Account Manager, with his career including former roles at Virgin Australia and Sabre.



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## SeaLink tech write-down

SEALINK Travel Group today announced a \$1.6 million "non-cash impairment charge" related to UWAI, an IT venture co-founded by SeaLink Chairman Andrew McEvoy, in which the company invested last year.

Just 18 months ago SeaLink bought into UWAI, a mobile app which translates local business content into Chinese, with outgoing CEO Jeff Ellison at the time saying the deal made SeaLink UWAI's largest client.

McEvoy and two co-founders established UWAI in Dec 2017 - five months before SeaLink acquired its \$3.2m stake.

Today the company said despite the concept behind the business remaining sound, UWAI had "failed to achieve milestones as set out in its initial business case".

The 50% UWAI write-off was revealed as part of SeaLink's annual results announcement, which saw the company report a 19.5% uplift in sales to \$248.8m.

The acquisition of Kingfisher Bay Resort on Qld's Fraser Island drove the revenue surge, and while underlying net profit after tax was up 6% to \$23.4 million, one-off costs saw SeaLink's pre-tax profit result decline almost 10% to \$24.9 million.

As well as the successful integration of Kingfisher Bay, other highlights of the year included the debut of the new Bruny Island Ferry service in Tas, and the renewal of a ferry contract in Moreton Bay, Qld.

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## 737 MAX trials

CERTIFICATION flights for the grounded Boeing 737 MAX aircraft could commence as soon as Oct, according to Federal Aviation Administration sources.

Among a range of other reviews, test flights are one of the key steps to returning the global MAX fleet to service, after two crashes claimed the lives of 346 people.

Boeing said it expects 737 MAXs to be flying commercially again before the end of 2019.

SeaLink said its figures had been impacted by "challenging trading conditions in the key NSW market," as well as on the Murray River in South Australia.

On Sydney Harbour, softening demand has seen the suspension of SeaLink's Manly to Barangaroo ferries, effective immediately.

The company also confirmed that an announcement regarding a new CEO was "imminent".

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Spirit of Australia



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## VA, freedom loyalty deal

**VIRGIN** Australia has shaken hands with major furniture retailer freedom to form a new loyalty partnership, with Velocity Points to become the currency of freedom's new loyalty program, myfreedom.

Under the terms of the new agreement, freedom loyalty customers will have the option of linking their myfreedom accounts to Virgin's Velocity Frequent Flyer program, where they can earn one Velocity Point per \$1 spent in store or online.

Freedom members will also receive \$100 of freedom credit for every \$2,000 spent as an added incentive to link up with Virgin's loyalty scheme.

To celebrate the new partnership, Virgin has revealed it will give away 100,000 Velocity Points to one freedom member each week for seven weeks as a reward for signing up to the joint-scheme, commencing today.

"We're really pleased to partner with freedom as we know our members will be excited to now earn points when purchasing new furniture and homewares," said Virgin's Velocity Frequent Flyer CEO Karl Schuster.

"This partnership will give our members even more ways to earn points and get even closer to taking that well deserved holiday," he added.

To mark the launch, freedom is offering its myfreedom members who link up with Velocity double points per \$1 spent until 23 Sep.

"This exciting new partnership offers exceptional value to both myfreedom and Velocity members," said Jason Piggott, freedom's General Manager Marketing.

Research conducted by Virgin and freedom found that 87% of Aussies believe that buying new furniture was "almost as refreshing" as taking a holiday.

## New Eggleston role

**FORMER** Helloworld senior executive Peter Eggleston has been promoted to the position of Chief Commercial Officer at Journey Beyond, several months after joining the experiential tourism operator as Group Mgr, Growth Projects (**TD** 08 Mar).

The move follows the ongoing expansion of the Journey Beyond portfolio, which includes Rottneest Express, Cruise Whitsundays, Journey Beyond Rail Expeditions, Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef, Darwin Harbour Cruises, Eureka Skydeck and Horizontal Falls Seaplane Adventures (**TD** 06 Aug).

A new structure will see Deb Falvey continue in the role of GM National Sales for key accounts, along with interim responsibility for International Sales.

Dave Atherton has also been appointed as GM Sales & Marketing Rail Expeditions, to focus specifically on The Ghan, Indian Pacific, The Overland and Great Southern.



## Window Seat

**TRAVELLERS** are all too aware of the frustration one can feel when facing lengthy delays at an airport departure lounge - well take stock of this novel remedy.

A Southwest Airlines employee decided to play games with passengers delayed at the Orlando International Airport due to heavy rain, headed up by a game of "who has the worst drivers licence photo"?

Passenger Kristen Dundas took to Twitter to describe the unusual moment.

"I was getting HEATED until this gate agent started playing games with everyone to pass the time and now I'm like, 'I'll wait all damn night if you keep this up' #amazing," she posted.

The airline responded by praising its creative employee.

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## UK 3D scanners

**MAJOR** airports in the UK are set to be fitted with 3D scanners in a move to cut down long queues at security checkpoints.

United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson told the *BBC* that “by making journeys through UK airports easier than ever, this new equipment will help boost the vital role our airports play in securing the United Kingdom’s position as a global hub for trade, tourism and investment”.

The technology, similar to CT scanners used in hospitals, could potentially mark the end of liquid restrictions by providing a clearer picture of a bag’s contents, which security staff can zoom in to and rotate for closer inspection.

It is currently on trial at London Heathrow Airport, with other major air hubs set to have them installed by 2022.

The scanners are also being used at Schipol airport in Amsterdam.

## Sri Lanka safety

**THE** state of emergency ruling was officially lifted in Sri Lanka last Thu, which the local industry hopes will see tourism revived following the tragic Easter bombings that targeted prominent hotels and churches in Apr (**TD** 23 Apr).

Travel advisories still remain at category 2 and 3, meaning travellers are still being warned by Smartraveller to “exercise a high degree of caution” when visiting the destination.

President of the Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka, Trevor Rajaratnam, said the move would send a positive message to the rest of the world.

“It’s a huge positive move and will also help airlines, which depend on more inbound travellers,” he added.

Prior to the terror attacks, Sri Lanka was named by Lonely Planet as the “top country for travel in 2019”.

## New int’l flights to Avalon?



**AVALON** Airport has penned a Memorandum of Understanding with major shareholder of Vietjet Air, Sovico Group, in a move that could see new international flights touch down at the regional Victorian destination.

Linfox Airports Chairman David Fox signed the MoU with Sovico Group, Chairman of Founding Committee Nguyen Thanh Hung.

The agreement was witnessed by Australian PM Scott Morrison and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc.

Avalon Airport opened its doors to international flights for the first time last Dec, with AirAsia now servicing the hub, connecting it to more than 130 destinations across Southeast Asia.

Vietjet Air is the first private airline in Vietnam.

**Pictured** following the signing are: Andrea Fox, Linfox Airports; Justin Giddings, CEO, Avalon Airport; Vu Pham Nguyen Tung, Director of Project Development, Vietjet; and David Fox, Chairman, Linfox Airports.

## Vale Shane Kennedy

**THE** Solomon Islands tourism community is mourning the passing of industry stalwart Shane Kennedy.

Kennedy, who passed Fri last week in Brisbane, owned the King Solomon Hotel in Honiara and the Gizo Hotel in Gizo in the Western Province.

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\*Unless sold out prior. Selected routes, travel days, dates and conditions apply.



## Disney attractions

A **HOST** of new attractions have been planned for Disney Parks spanning its locations in Orlando, Paris and Anaheim.

Announced at the D23 Expo in Anaheim yesterday, a brand new Avengers campus will be coming to Paris and California in 2020, with one of its main attractions being Disney's first ride to feature Spiderman.

Epcot in Florida will also get four new neighbourhoods: World Showcase, World Nature, World Discovery and World Celebration.

Announced by original cast member Dick van Dyke, headlining the World Showcase neighbourhood will be the first-ever *Mary Poppins*-inspired attraction based within the United Kingdom Pavilion on Cherry Tree Lane.

## BA strike problems

**BRITISH** Airways wrongly told thousands of passengers over the weekend their flights were cancelled, according to the BBC.

Following a strike announcement from the British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA) for 09, 10 and 27 Sep (**TD** yesterday), BA immediately informed passengers it would offer refunds and rebookings for cancelled flights.

However, the airline contacted some passengers flying on non-strike days, erroneously informing them their flights had been cancelled also.

British Airways contacted misinformed customers hours later, with the airline supposedly working through a backlog of 40,000 calls from confused customers.

## TOSP's Queensland show



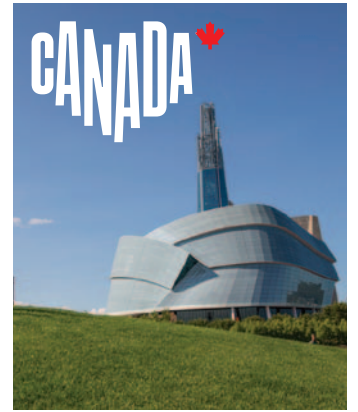
**TREASURES** of the South Pacific (TOSP) hosted 170 Queensland agents to a series of educational events held on the Gold Coast and Brisbane last week.

A wide range of tourism product was put on show, spanning the Cook Islands, Fiji, Norfolk Island, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tahiti, New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands.

Organisers said the attendees were inspired by the culture, nature, creativity and adventurous spirit that the South Pacific has to offer.

**Pictured** above from left: Matt Brookes, Tourism Cook Islands; Larry Burrows, New Caledonia Tourism; Richard Skewes, Tourism Solomons; Karen Hitchings, Norfolk Tourism; Chris Tudehope, Vanuatu Tourism Office; Nicci

Foulsham, Tahiti Tourisme; David McMahon, Fiji Tourism; Julie McKinley, Fiji Airways; Onorina Fagawai, Pacific Trade Invest; and Fasitau Ula, Samoa Tourism.



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## Malindo changes

**MALINDO** Air has appointed Mushafiz Mustafa Bakri as its second-ever Chief Executive Officer, with Mushafiz to take the reigns from Chandran Rama Muthy on 23 Sep.

Mushafiz joined Malindo in 2013 as a pilot, and is currently Director of Safety, Security and Quality of sister company Thai Lion Air.

Chandran will move to parent company Lion Air Group as Group Strategic Director.

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## Railway Adv brox

**RAILWAY** Adventures has launched its new brochure for 2020, expanding on its available destinations, escorted rail holidays and luxury rail options.

India, Korea, New Zealand and Western Australia all feature as new destinations in the brochure, along with the new products of journeys on Deccan Odyssey, Eastern & Oriental Express, Golden Eagle and Rovos Rail.

A sneak peek at 2021 is also included, which showcases future exclusive rail offerings in the Adriatic, the Balkans and more.

## Explore new in ISL

**EXPLORE** has launched a new four-day Iceland Yurt Adventure beginning Apr 2020.

The new itinerary debuts a private collection of yurts in the Golden Circle in Iceland, with highlights of the trip including visits to the capital Reykjavik, the black basalt cliffs at Vik I Myrdal and the big three waterfalls - Skogafoss, Seljalandsfoss and Gullfoss.

Prices lead in at \$1,630 per person and trips begin touring from 10 Apr, and are limited to 14 guests.

## AFTA UPDATE

from Jayson Westbury



**THE** violent scenes in Hong Kong are difficult to understand and hard to watch as it has been a

place on the global tourism stage for decades in which nothing like this has occurred before.

The concept of protests in a tourism city in China also seems rather odd with what most would say is the norm, but as it turns out, the facts are these protests are real & it would seem that this may go on longer than all of us, including the global tourism industry, would like.

When would any of us expect to see the Smartraveller alert at "high degree of caution" for Hong Kong?

It is a reminder to keep a close eye on [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as events and changes continue to be rather fluid.

From all reports, apart from those air services which have been suspended or withdrawn for now, every attempt to remain business as usual does seem to be the main thrust of advice to travellers, in particular travellers who are transiting.

Of course this is a very tricky situation and it would seem things can change in a very short period of time and no doubt all

those across the travel value chain are doing the best they can to advise, support and assist clients to the best of their ability.

All the airlines who operate to Hong Kong from Australia appear to be doing the best they can to keep everyone informed and updated on the status, but this is on a daily basis, and again, a close eye is needed to ensure travel plans can be fulfilled or alternatives considered, should that be required.

These situations always present challenges for the travel industry and it is difficult to give clear advisory as to what to tell clients to do, so all I can say is to keep a close eye on the travel advisories and AFTA will do what it can to keep the lines of communications open.

So what is it all about?

Earlier this year the Hong Kong Govt introduced an extradition bill that would enable Hong Kong citizens to be extradited to mainland China and Taiwan.

The protests are not only to the fabric of the bill, but the jurisdiction of Hong Kong as an autonomous region.

It is a troubling situation on a global stage of the tourism industry and we can all only hope that in the end the situation is resolved peacefully.

## MTA hits the beach



**HAMILTON** Island recently invited five MTA - Mobile Travel Agents advisors on a two-night

famil, hosted at the adults-only Beach Club.

The agents were treated to a Talk & Taste Wine & Cheese epicurean experience at luxury resort qualia, enjoyed a day trip to Hill Inlet at Whitehaven Beach, and dinner at coca chu, before ending their stay with lunch at Hamilton Island Golf Club on neighbouring Dent Island.

**Pictured** enjoying the sunshine are Jonica Gilbert; Margy Stimson; Melissa Hope; Brianna Lenton, Hamilton Island Account Executive Australia & New Zealand; Debbie Gray; and Alecia Zillman.

## Air India troubles

**INDIAN** oil suppliers have suspended the sale of jet fuel to Air India, with the carrier having missed fuel payments for several months, according to Indian publication *Mint*.

Subsidiary Alliance Air will also be embargoed from fuel supplies, with the ban to take place at six of the country's airports.

AI's non-payments total ₹5,000 crore (AU\$1.02 million).

## Exodus sustainable

**EXODUS** Travels will launch a new sustainable tourism initiative next month, with agents invited to join the active holiday company in Sydney on 10 Sep or Melbourne on 11 Sep.

Special guest speaker and Exodus filmmaker Oly Pemberton will screen a teaser on the night to accompany the announcement, with all agents present in the running to win an Exodus adventure.

RSVP for Melbourne **HERE** and Sydney **HERE**.

## CINZ Christchurch

**CONVENTIONS & Incentives** New Zealand's (CINZ) MEETINGS will return to Oautahi Christchurch in 2021.

The annual trade show was last hosted in the city in 2008 and has been shared between Auckland and Rotorua since.

The event will take place from 12 to 14 May at the city's new convention centre, Te Pae.

## MONEY

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

**AU\$1 = US0.677**

**THE** Australian dollar is at risk of sliding to a decade low, as it remains under pressure from the continued slide of the Chinese Yuan as a result of the ongoing trade war between China and the United States.

CNY fell to an 11-year low of US\$7.147 on Mon, dragging the Australian dollar below 67 US cents for the first time in three weeks, before a slight rebound to 67.7 cents.

*Wholesale rates this morning.*

US	\$0.677
UK	£0.554
NZ	\$1.060
Euro	€0.610
Japan	¥71.88
Thailand	฿20.73
China	¥4.844
South Africa	10.34
Canada	\$0.898
Crude oil	US\$59.34



## Hooters Vegas buy

**OYO** Hotels & Homes has signed a deal to buy the Hooters Casino Hotel in Las Vegas, with plans afoot to rebrand the property to the OYO Hotel & Casino Las Vegas by the end of the year.

The purchase of the 657-room property marks the entrance of India's largest hotel chain in the city, in a deal estimated to be worth US\$135 million.

## AIDA battery deal

**CARNIVAL** Corporation has announced its German AIDA Cruises brand has signed an agreement with Corvus Energy to install lithium-ion batteries on its fleet of ships.

The deal will aim to make its vessels "emission-neutral", and will later roll out to Costa Cruises.

## SQ gets personal

**SINGAPORE** Airlines has partnered with growth management platform Insider, enabling the carrier to enhance the "personalised experiences" for its customers across all of its online channels.

The deal will see Singapore Airlines harvest more data points on each of its customers using AI tech, optimising its multichannel customer experience as a result.

## Majestic gets closer

**THE** Majestic Las Vegas hotel has cleared another hurdle, receiving approval by the Clark County Commissioners to go ahead with construction.

The five-star, non-gaming, 720-room property is slated for completion in early 2023.



## DREAM BIG AND WIN!

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The countdown is on until Dream Cruises' *Explorer Dream* arrives in Sydney on 27 October.

To celebrate the Australian deployment for the newest member of its fleet, Dream Cruises has partnered with **Travel Daily** this month to give one lucky reader the chance to win a 7-night Queensland coastal cruise in a balcony stateroom on board *Explorer Dream*.

To enter, all you need to do is share with us what dream feature you would include if you were involved in the design of a Dream cruise ship.

Perhaps liquid chocolate on tap in your cabin, or someone to hold your shade umbrella as you lie by the pool?

We're after creative entries in the form of a poem, photo, jingle, video or something else. Use your imagination!

*Explorer Dream*... Discover a New Dream!

Send your answers to [dreamcruises@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:dreamcruises@traveldaily.com.au)



DREAM CRUISES

## BA London changes

**BRITISH** Airways has filed for changes on a number of London Gatwick services in 2020.

Updates include a reduction of service from LGW to Las Vegas from six weekly services to five from 31 Aug 2020, a drop on the LGW to Orlando route from 14 to 13 weekly flights from 31 Aug 2020, and an increase of flights on the LGW to Saint Lucia service from seven to nine per week from 29 Aug.

## PROS buy TraveLaer

**AI SOFTWARE** business PROS has announced the acquisition of aviation software company TraveLaer SAS for US\$12 million.

The purchase will enable PROS to expand its end-to-end solution services utilising the New Distribution Capability (NDC) platform.

## FairFly Wellness

**AIRFARE** price assurance provider FairFly has released FairFly Wellness, a solution designed to deliver insights into traveller wellbeing.

FairFly Wellness will focus on learning more about the negative health impacts of delays, red-eyes, layovers, weekends away, airline quality and even the "middle seat problem".

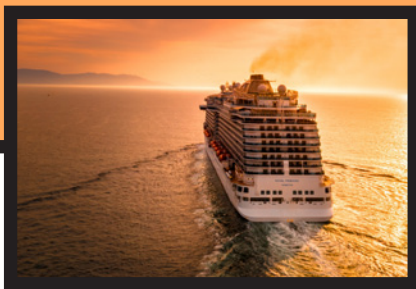
## Why I don't DIY vid

**THE** Greece and Mediterranean Travel Centre has launched a new video to accompany its #WhyIDontDIYTravel campaign (**TD** 11 Mar).

The video tracks the adventures of Anne and Lisa, who embark on similar holidays with drastically different outcomes due to one having booked with an ATAS agent - **CLICK HERE** to view.

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# SEARCH JOBS

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Join a globally respected high end leisure travel organisation to plan, develop and deliver luxury cruise itineraries, including shore excursion programs and all pre and post content. The role includes negotiating and managing the product life cycle & developing product content.

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## Cruise Travel Consultant - Brisbane up to \$55K + super

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## Product Coordinator - Sydney \$50K to \$55K + super

This specialist travel wholesaler is seeking an experienced Product Coordinator to join their growing team. Working Monday to Friday, you will be responsible for all aspects of product including itinerary development, database management & more for unique and varied destinations.

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