

Adventure business profits plunge

ADVENTURE tourism operator Experience Co has reported a statutory net loss of \$51.41 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun, a 7% fall on the \$42.26 million loss it reported during the same period last year.

Earnings for the company also decreased by a third in the last financial year, recording \$87.4 million for the period, a slide from the \$130 million notched up the previous year.

Experience Co attributed the falls to “challenging trading conditions”, which included the bushfire crisis and the on-set of the pandemic that led to the suspension of its operations on 23 Mar (**TD** 23 Mar).

The bottom line was also affected by asset impairments and one-off restructuring costs.

A reduction in debt was achieved however, via bank loans, restructures, and the sale of its GBR Helicopters business in Jan.

AFTA, CLIA lukewarm on CATO plan

THE Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) draft discussion paper urging reform of the travel sector (**TD** 24 Aug) has prompted responses from the other industry organisations cited in the proposal, with AFTA Chair Tom Manwaring saying the issues raised by CATO have already been the subject of long-term discussions with government.

“AFTA continues to lobby on these highly sensitive matters including in our pre-Budget submission...the chances of success are not elevated as a result of publicly airing these issues in this way,” he said.

The CATO plan envisages the expansion of the existing AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme (ATAS) to be jointly administered by CATO, AFTA and Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), with bookings through all travel agent, tour operator and cruise line participants protected against supplier insolvency via a

compulsory levy on bookings.

Manwaring noted that AFTA had already been looking at the appropriate evolution of ATAS and the currently in-hibernation AFTA Chargeback Scheme (ACS) for almost 12 months, adding “it’s a highly complex matter”.

He also confirmed that the need for specific consumer support had been raised in Mar this year for Government consideration.

“We have had preliminary discussions with CATO and prefer to continue these discussions in a collaborative way rather than via the media,” the AFTA Chair added.

A CLIA spokesman acknowledged the report, noting CLIA had not been consulted about the plan.

“CLIA will nevertheless take time to consider the discussion document and provide its perspective...unlike CATO and AFTA, CLIA is a global trade association and may therefore be limited in its ability to become directly involved as suggested”.

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today has six pages of news including our PUZZLE page.

Bonus episode!

THE exclusive interview with AFTA CEO Darren Rudd conducted at The Travel Industry Hub last week has been distilled into a special bonus episode of *Travel Daily's News on the Fly* podcast.

That's in addition to our regular weekly edition which also went live this morning at traveldaily.com.au/podcasts or wherever you prefer to get your podcasts.

Carnival Qld 2022

CARNIVAL Cruise Line today released details of its ex-Brisbane cruise program from Jun 2022 through to Mar 2023, with *Carnival Spirit* to become “the newest and largest ship homeported year-round from Queensland” and itineraries on sale from \$374pp - 13 13 94.

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Cruising the web

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) is gearing up to run a series of webinars covering topics such as river cruising, luxury sailing, expedition cruising and port destinations.

Currently the industry body is hosting a session on river cruising, available as a recording via CLIA's Members Hub, with a new session focusing on Heritage Line's range of offerings available from 01 Sep.

That will be followed up by a luxury cruise showcase, which runs from 14-17 Sep, where attendees can hear from the global leaders of top luxury cruise brands through exclusive interviews covering each line's response to the COVID-19 pandemic & their recovery plans.

More sessions planned from Sep to Dec include expedition product from brands such as Coral Expeditions & Ponant - visit CLIA Members Hub for more.

Jayride preps for tailwinds

DESPITE being significantly impacted in the 2H of the 2020 financial year due to travel restrictions, airport transport marketplace Jayride managed a slight 1% uptick in revenue to \$3.86 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun.

The stoic result was set up by a strong first half of the year, which saw \$2.4 million in earnings, before the pandemic battered the 2H period and drove down revenue by 34% to \$1.46 million.

Prior to the outbreak in Mar, trading for Jayride was up by 65% on the previous corresponding period, with the ensuing travel crunch presiding over a 94% plummet in total trips taken.

Jayride also posted an operating loss of \$6.27 million for the financial year, an improvement of 22% on the previous period's loss of \$8.06 million, with 2H 2020 improving by an encouraging 33%

when compared to 1H 2020.

The FY financial report from the ASX-listed company also showed swift action was taken to insulate itself from the travel shutdown, implementing \$7 million in savings and investing \$21m in technology and talent, an attempt to take advantage of a predicted recovery following the pandemic.

Early signs of a rebound have been noted in trading since Apr, with Jul trips up by 111% to 5,100 when compared to Jun.

Jayride MD Rod Bishop said the business was now well positioned to "benefit from tailwinds" in 2021 as the travel sector recovers from the shutdown, focusing on cultivating new partnerships, targeting markets that are reopening, and increasing the quality of the passenger experience through a combo of COVID prepared rides and tailored booking options.



Window Seat

LEAVE it to those resourceful Girl Scouts to come up with a novel way for people to explore the United States' best parks while the world is in lockdown.

Girl Scouts of the USA has introduced a free virtual map of the country's state park tours across all 50 states, making it possible for virtual visitors to hike through the wilderness.

Collaborating with National Association of State Park Directors, the Girl Scouts present a new interactive map so travellers can join a wildlife adventure, watch interviews with rangers, and participate online in fun outdoor activities.

And the best part? The virtual snake bites don't hurt anywhere near as much as the real thing.

[CLICK HERE](#) to take a hike.

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NEWS ON THE FLY

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CORPORATE UPDATE

Amex GBT gets the message

AMERICAN Express Global Business Travel (GBT) has announced enhancements to the Amex GBT Mobile platform, expanding the offering to more than 24 countries where it has a local presence.

A new push notification feature in the associated smartphone app allows travel managers to send messages and tips to travellers based on their location.

The Travel Program Notification enhancement will be further boosted with the introduction of two-way conversations via push notifications in the coming months, the company said.

At the same time the option for business travellers to message live with a GBT consultant via Apple Business Chat using the Messages app on iOS devices has expanded to more GBT client segments and to more countries beyond the USA, including the addition of the UK, Canada, France and Germany.

The company's Chief Commercial Officer, Andrew Crawley, said COVID-19 had been a catalyst for the expansion of

GBT's messaging capabilities.

"Mobile and messaging channels have untapped potential to be a conduit between the travel manager, traveller and travel counsellor in today's constantly changing travel information environment.

"We are thinking differently about information as a service and want to help our clients support the needs of their travellers by being present in the channels they trust," he said.

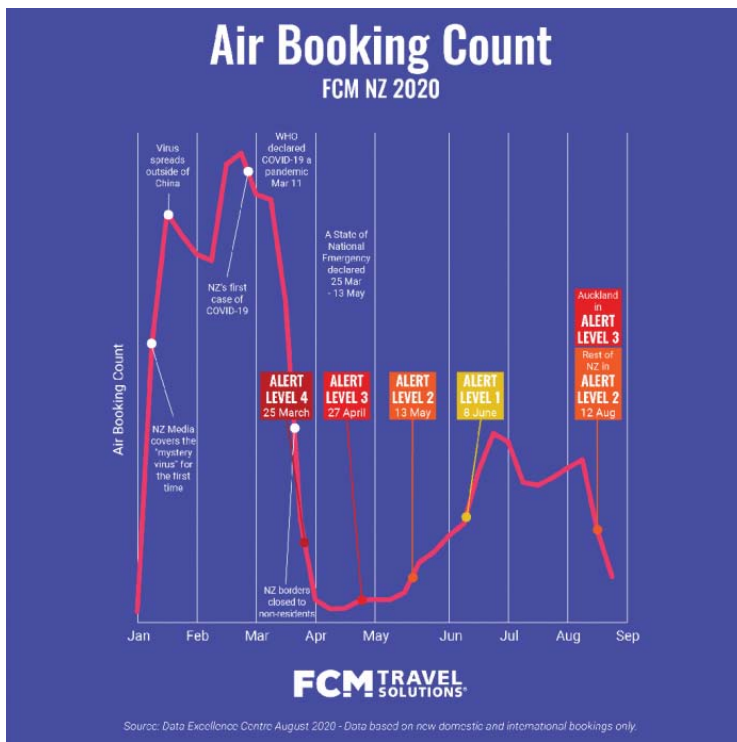
Other developments include integration with the new Amex GBT Travel Vitals platform, giving users a mobile-first "know before you go" feature in the app, which highlights itinerary-specific data to create a customised pre-trip briefing summary highlighting relevant travel regulations and restrictions.

The company said it was working on expanding its chat features to additional popular messaging channels before the end of the year.

The Travel Vitals platform summarises COVID-19 advisories at travelvitals.amexgbt.com.



FCM data shows impact of restrictions



THE rolling impact of changes to COVID-19 safety and health advisories in New Zealand has been graphically illustrated by new data from Flight Centre's FCM Travel Solutions (**pictured**).

The "air booking count" data shows the progress of coronavirus and the associated Alert Levels, alongside the number of bookings through each phase of the

pandemic response. In particular the recent outbreak in Auckland and reimposition of Alert Level 3 has seen bookings plummet again.

FCM NZ Director of Sales James Shuttleworth highlighted the disturbing data via a post on LinkedIn, noting that "stability, when it comes, will be a wonderful thing".

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Tracing plan stalls

A PROPOSAL by US airlines to collect contract tracing information on inbound passengers is unlikely to proceed this year, according to a report from news agency *Reuters*.

The US Centers for Disease Control has been conducting talks with major carriers and officials from the Trump administration, in an effort to mandate the collection and reporting of details which would allow contact tracing of arrivals in the USA to aid in coronavirus containment efforts and boost consumer confidence.

However, privacy concerns raised during a White House meeting last week now appear to have kiboshed the plan.

UK corridors shut

THE British Government has updated its list of "safe corridors" overnight, after a surge in COVID-19 cases in Switzerland, Jamaica and the Czech Republic.

Effective from tomorrow, travellers entering the UK from all three countries must self-isolate for 14 days, with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office also now warning against all but essential travel to the affected nations.

However, Cuba has been added to the official Travel Corridor list, with the UK Government's Joint Biosecurity Centre evaluating destinations for their COVID-19 propensity based on a range of indicators including 20 cases per 100,000 over a seven-day period.



Save Aussie tourism

AUSTRALIA'S state and territory leaders are being challenged in an open letter supported by some of the biggest brands in the travel industry.

The letter is appealing to "demonstrate a way forward to restore interstate travel" amid a sporadic spate of border closures in recent months.

The author of the letter, Baillie Lodges COO Craig Bradbury, said the industry's opportunity to benefit from a whole new market of domestic travellers during COVID-19 had been "dashed" by the ongoing state border restrictions.

"There's been so much support and pent-up demand to date from domestic travellers, but now, as we've been forced to ask our guests to once again postpone their trips and re-arrange flights, people are fed up and losing confidence," he said.

High-profile signatories so far include Flight Centre CEO Graham Turner, Spicers Retreats founder Jude Turner, Helloworld Executive Director and CEO Cinzia and Andrew Burnes and Intrepid Travel CEO James Thornton.

Future of travel agents consultants

OPINION

Gerd Wilmer is the Director of retail and corporate travel agency Landmark Travel. Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au.



TO MEET the challenges of the future we need to change the structure of our businesses.

Eliminate the weak points of the past, overcome the cash-flow challenges when the bookings start to come in and lay the ground work for a profitable future.

In many aspects we are the bottom feeders of the industry, relying on the generosity of suppliers (especially transport) for our income. We continue to lose hard-earned cash through commission recalls, ADMs and chargebacks.

When we restart, we will book travel 12 to 18 months in advance. Where is our cash going to come from? If we do not

change we will have little income for another 12 months or so. We all know what that means.

The Travel Agent Acts classified us as "agents for the suppliers".

These Acts have been rescinded. We are now free to define ourselves and our legal position.

I have during my 52 years as a travel agent always put my clients' interest first. All of you travel agents have the same philosophy. Now is the time to change and define our public

“
Now is the
time to change
and define our
perception
”

perception and legal standing.

In the future we will enter into consulting contracts for each booking. Our T&Cs do not mention the word "agent".

Our clients contract Landmark Travel to organise travel services

Theme parks slide

VILLAGE Roadshow Theme Parks has posted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization of \$36.3 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun, a \$40.2 million drop from the figure recorded in the corresponding period last year.

The company cited the bushfires, flooding and the pandemic as major factors driving the poor result, with the closure of its Gold Coast division from 22 Mar to 17 Jun a particularly significant blow to profits.

In an effort to rebound, GC parks comprised of Sea World, Wet'n'Wild and Warner Bros. Movie World, have several new attractions planned for 2021.

on their behalf. As consultants we plan, coordinate, establish and administer legally binding contracts between our clients and travel providers.

De facto, nothing has changed, but we are on a different legal footing.

As consultants we can only charge third party cost at cost.

Yes, it does mean that we cannot earn any commission. Our income will be a consultancy fee of, say 10% on the nett invoice amount for each component of the itinerary – good bye NCFs, taxes, etc. This fee is payable with the deposit and is non-refundable.

We use the client's credit card to pay as many suppliers as possible the net amount. This prevents income recalls and charge backs. It also protects the clients in case of supplier insolvency.

Collecting the income at the time of booking will overcome cash flow problems.

Another advantage is that our list of service fees is very short, mainly dealing with amendments and cancellations.

I acknowledge that this is a paradigm shift in our self-perception. If we do not become more professional, I do not see a future for us.

Problems with caps

THE Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA) says at the current rate it would take six months for international airlines to return home the reported 100,000 Aussies seeking to repatriate.

The industry body is pushing for the current overseas arrivals cap to be increased "to support more orderly outcomes for passengers and international airlines than are presently occurring."

BARA is also calling for more accurate reporting on how many Aussies wish to return home.

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cocktail recipes!

Travel Daily

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We want your recipes from around the world for our weekly feature.

Darren Rudd's first official interview as AFTA CEO. Read all about his plans for AFTA in the August issue of *travelBulletin*.

CLICK to read

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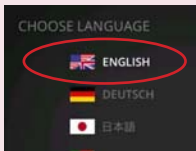


Pub quiz

1. The numbat is the state animal of which Australian state?
2. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines' Holland Herald is the longest-running inflight magazine. When was it first published?
 - a) 1950s
 - b) 1960s
 - c) 1970s
3. MSC Cruises was founded by Mediterranean Shipping Company in 1989 in which Italian city?
4. US Route 51 is mostly known in Memphis as what Boulevard?
5. The longest border between two countries is between which two nations?
6. Far North Queensland is home to three World Heritage Sites: the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics, and what?
7. What is thought to be the oldest inhabited continent in the world?
8. To no-one's surprise, Lithuanian is the official language of Lithuania, but apart from Russian, what other language is also widely spoken in the Baltic country?
9. TT was the IATA code of which former airline?
10. In terms of gross tonnage, what is the largest cruise ship in the world?
11. What city is this collection of pictures spelling out?



+



+



Unscramble

HOW many words can you make out of these nine letters? Every word needs to include the centre letter, have four letters or more and not be a proper noun or a plural. You can only use each letter once.

E	T	V
A	O	N
L	I	E

Good – 23 words
Very good – 34 words
Excellent – 45 words

Whose flag is this?



TODAY we continue with our theme of similar-looking flags.

Take away a coat of arms from the centre of another country's flag and you'll get this flag.

The reason for the similarities in the two flags is that the countries

were briefly part of the same state.

This flag was formerly adopted in 1861, making it one of the world's oldest flags.

Do you know whose flag this is? Check Monday for the answer.

Funnies Flashback



WE'VE trawled through the *TD* Window Seat archives to give you a blast from the past. Here's some gems from 02 Jul 2013.

SOME pretty small towns feature on Brindabella Airlines' network map, with some of the town's residents in Moree holding more than one job in the local tourism industry.

Take Alan from Moree's M&G Travel, who in addition to managing his agency, serves as the check-in agent at Moree Airport along with the agent at the car rental desk.

Alan also loads and unloads the bags to and from the flights, ensuring a truly thorough and personable service for arriving and departing Brindabella passengers.

RESEARCH conducted by British Airways has found that its flyers are happy as long as the plane is loaded with champers, has a good curry dish and has plenty of Cadbury's chocolates.

BA now stock a number of Cadbury brands after they were requested by Business Class passengers.

ANSWERS 27 AUG

Know your brands: 1 BP, 2 Nespresso, 3 Unilever, 4 Mastercard

Where in the world: Brandenburg Gate, Berlin, Germany

Whose animal is this: Fennec fox - Algeria



Amadeus inks Air NZ

AMADEUS has renewed its multi-year distribution agreement with Air New Zealand.

Travel sellers connected to the Amadeus Travel Platform will continue to enjoy access to Air New Zealand's flight schedules, load changes, seat maps, ancillaries and real-time updates.

Amadeus Asia Pacific Executive Vice President Airlines Cyril Tetaz said the company recognises and understands the challenges airlines are currently facing.

"Our cutting-edge technology and unmatched global distribution network will help Air New Zealand meet and overcome these challenges," he said.

"We pride ourselves on putting our customers at the heart of everything we do," Tetaz added.

SYD chops 20%

SYDNEY Airport is poised to axe more than 118 jobs amid a \$54 million half yearly loss posted last month and plummeting passenger numbers.

According to an internal company memo, the roles set to go will mainly be in the corporate and construction divisions.

Virtually Maldives

MORE than 100 Maldives-based properties have signed up for the country's new virtual tour, allowing prospective visitors to participate in a 360° virtual tour of more than 150 of its islands.

The tours will help the country's ambition of achieving its goal of attracting 850,000 visitors by the end of 2020.

Email [HERE](#) for more details.

AT LEAST some operators in the travel sector are finding a way to take off in this challenging climate - just ask the operator of Balloon Aloft, which this week took to the sky for the first time in Thredbo (pictured).

The company's hot air balloons departed on their hour-long flight at sunrise before floating across the Kosciuszko National Park and down the Crackenback Valley towards Jindabyne.

Buoyed by approval from the Thredbo and National Parks and Wildlife Service, Balloon Aloft's MD Craig Farrell said the ambition to launch the cool new tourist

adventure was driven by a need to pursue the unusual, hot air ballooning over ice and snow.

"It was absolutely spectacular over stunning Thredbo and the beautiful Snowy Mountains, yet also technically challenging due to the Alpine environment," Farrell said.

Call 1800 810 973 to book.

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

Blue Lagoon Cruises is currently offering discounts of up to 45% off its three-, four- and seven-night cruises until 30 Sep. The promotion will apply to cruises departing through to Jun 2022, providing flexibility around travel restriction uncertainty. [CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

Seabourn is currently offering an early bonus saving of 10% off the base fare when bookings for its 2021 autumn or 2022 winter/spring voyages are made by 30 Sep. To be eligible for the deal, cruises must be paid for in full and applies to new and existing bookings. [CLICK HERE](#) for details.

Members of **Etihad's** loyalty program Etihad Guest can now convert loyalty points from other programs into Etihad Guest Miles and enjoy one Tier Mile for every mile transferred. Transfers must be made by 31 Aug from other loyalty programs such as Air Miles and First Abu Dhabi Bank.

MSC Cruises is saying thank you to the world's "healthcare heroes" by offering discount cruise fares of 50% or more on all MSC sailings through to the end of 2021. The special first responder cruise program will go on sale from 31 Aug. Call 1300 028 502 for details.

Qatar cleans it up

THE Qatar National Tourism Council has launched its Qatar Clean initiative, a program aimed at getting the country up to best cleanliness practice to welcome back tourists.

Created in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health, the project ensures strict standards of hygiene and cleanliness are met by implementing enhanced sterilisation protocols across hotels, shopping malls and other tourist attractions.

EEAA web series

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) is launching a sector-by-sector webinar series to generate momentum for the return of exhibitions and business events.

The webinars will aim to address the current and future market conditions for key sectors of the exhibition and business events industry, with EEAA Chief Executive Claudia Sagripanti saying the initiative would also aim to open an exchange for industry to discuss the key issues specific to venues and others.

"The current market conditions have created uncertainty with many companies experiencing impacted cash flow and decreased return on investment," Sagripanti highlighted.

Got a confidential tip? Contact *Travel Daily* via our secure WhatsApp service on +61 2 8007 6760 or click [HERE](#)