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QF doubles Accor

QANTAS has expanded its partnership with Accor to offer more rewards for Qantas Frequent Flyer and ALL - Accor Live Limitless members, who can now “double dip” on rewards when linking their membership accounts.

Previously only available to Qantas Platinum and Platinum One Frequent Flyers, pax with Gold memberships can also now enjoy double the ALL value when they book Qantas flights.

On top of the Qantas Points they would already earn, Gold and above members in each program will now earn 1 ALL point per \$2 spent - up from 1 ALL Reward point per \$5 spent.

Cocktail tourist death

A BRITISH tourist died while on holiday in Jamaica after attempting to drink all 21 cocktails on a bar menu at the Royal Decameron Club Caribbean in Saint Ann’s.

A new coroner’s report into the death last year found 53-year-old Tim Southern died of “acute gastroenteritis due to alcohol consumption” after imbibing 12 cocktails on the list by midnight.

Webjet zips through deal

BUY now, pay later business Zip has signed a new deal with Webjet that will from today provide the OTA’s customers with more flexible transaction options.

The payment company already services travellers through companies like Qantas and Expedia, and through its latest venture with Webjet, offers delayed payment options via Zip Pay for smaller purchases of up to \$1,000, as well as larger transactions of up to \$10,000 through its Zip Money product.

Zip Pay is offered as an interest-free service, however, there is a \$7.95 monthly account fee attached to plans, with repayments to be made via a minimum \$10 a week scheme.

Meanwhile, Zip Money is offering a special 12-month interest-free period on all eligible

Webjet purchases (normally three months), and according to Zip’s help page, charges then shift to a 25.9% per annum rate after the interest-free period ends.

Zip Money also charges a \$7.95 account fee and a one-off establishment fee may also apply for new customers.

“Webjet provides customers with an unmatched world of choice, and the addition of Zip is yet another way Webjet is empowering customers to book travel in a way that suits their lifestyle,” CEO David Galt said.

Win a New Cal trip

THE Travel Junction is giving advisors the chance to win two return tix to Noumea on Aircalin - see the **back page** for more info.

Today’s issue of TD

Travel Daily today features five pages of news including **Business Events News**, plus a front cover wrap from **CVFR Consolidation Services** and a full page from **The Travel Junction**.

Pelikin ISIC cards

PELIKIN is now the exclusive travel money provider of the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), offering all the benefits of the Pelikin money card, including 2% cashback on eligible international purchases.

Agents will earn \$5 on every ISIC/IYTC card a customer purchases via the Pelikin app - email info@evolutiontc.com.au for more details and to request the new student and youth marketing materials.

Wendy’s China Week

AUSSIE travellers can take advantage of daily discounts on selected Wendy Wu China tours during the operator’s ‘China Week’ sale, which celebrates the country’s recent reopening.

From now until 12 Jul, customers can save up to \$800pp on selected all-inclusive tours in 2023 and up to \$300pp on 2024 departures, such as the 26-day Grand Tour of China, which is on sale from \$8,180pp twin share, inclusive of all entry fees and int’l airfares.

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JQ ready to cook!

NEW direct Jetstar flights between Sydney and the Cook Islands' capital Rarotonga will take off tonight at 9pm.

The service will fly three times a week and be operated by Jetstar's new fuel-efficient Airbus A321neo LR aircraft.

Egglestone to lead Zenith

EXCLUSIVE

SENIOR travel industry executive Peter Egglestone has today been announced as the new Chief Executive Officer of Zenith Payments, the parent company of the popular TravelPay and TravelPay B2B platforms.

Egglestone joins the Sydney-based fintech firm from his most recent role in Adelaide where he was Chief Commercial and Revenue Officer at Journey Beyond (TD 24 Oct 2022).

Zenith's current CEO, Andrea Slark, who has been in the role for seven years (TD 03 Nov 2016), will become the group's Executive Chairman to focus on strategic initiatives and partnerships.

She previously worked alongside Egglestone when both were part

of the senior Jetset Travelworld Limited management team.

"I have known Peter for many years and I look forward to working with him again," she said.

"He is a strategic thinker with strong influencing and execution skills, and his experience will be invaluable in expanding Zenith Payments' market presence, ensuring sustainable business growth and solidifying the company's position as a leader in the payments industry."

Egglestone, who will formally take on the Zenith CEO position on 01 Jul, said he was thrilled to be embarking on the new chapter.

"It is an honour to lead such a dynamic and forward-thinking organisation," he said.

More industry appointments on [page five](#) of today's *Travel Daily*.

LH, SAA codeshare

SOUTH African Airways will resume its codeshare partnership with fellow Star Alliance carrier Lufthansa from Aug this year, with initial routes including Johannesburg flights to Frankfurt, Cape Town and Durban.

Tweed upgrade

OAKS Casuarina Santai Resort has just completed a multi million dollar refurbishment, with the property on NSW's far north coast offering studio, one- and two-bedroom apartment-style suites along with a spa, award-winning restaurant and poolside wedding ceremony facilities.



Window Seat

A FLIGHT delay nightmare turned into a once-in-a-lifetime experience for one very fortunate traveller.

Phil Stringer endured an 18-hour wait while trying to catch his scheduled flight home from Oklahoma to North Carolina with American Airlines, after it was repeatedly delayed due to maintenance issues.

Unable to take the next day's flight due to personal circumstances requiring him to get home ASAP, Stringer waited for his original flight, which finally took off at midnight - and was shocked to discover that he was the sole passenger on board!

Feeling like a nuisance, Stringer apologised profusely to the crew, who assured him it was no bother at all and even jokingly teased him about the unusual situation.

In fact, the crew threw the solo passenger a private party in First class, serving him whatever food and beverages he wanted during the two-hour journey and swapping plenty of jokes and laughter.

Not only did Stringer disembark his flight with an unforgettable story to tell, he also walked away with new friendships, even swapping numbers with the flight crew so they could keep in contact!

Wendy Wu Tours

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Schengen visas to become digital

THE European Commission has confirmed a new political agreement which will allow for the digitalisation of the Schengen visa procedure, aiming to simplify, modernise and harmonise the visa procedures for non-EU citizens applying for a visa.

Current procedures for the Schengen area which covers most of Europe are heavily reliant on paper documentation, with new regulations - still subject to formal adoption and with a seven-year transition period - set to create a unified EU online visa platform.

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Rapid rise in chargebacks

TRAVEL companies are facing a surge in the volume of chargebacks initiated by disgruntled consumers, new research from Amadeus payment firm Outpayce has found.

The global study, which surveyed 46 senior airline and travel agency executives, found chargebacks have been growing by 30% year-on-year, driven by traveller perceptions

that chargebacks are easier to obtain than refunds (62%), more traveller awareness of chargeback processes (56%), and the ease of actioning chargebacks via mobile banking apps (42%).

The data also showed that travel merchants are losing the battle when it comes to contesting claims, with only a quarter of travel firms seeing more than 60% of disputes awarded in their favour, and nearly half noting they win less than 40% of disputes they opt to contest.

The research concluded that the high volume of disputes, difficulty in collecting payments info, & low resources were all contributing factors to poor outcomes.

Outpayce Senior VP, Commercial, Tania Platt, said the study suggests there's "a real opportunity for the industry to take a step back and ask how it can industrialise chargeback management".

Elanor Leura buy

THE Leura Gardens Resort in the NSW Blue Mountains has changed hands for more than \$20 million, joining the 19-strong portfolio of boutique properties held by the Elanor Hotel Accommodation Fund.

Purchased with vacant possession, the 92-room property, which used to operate under the Nesuto brand, recently underwent a \$5 million renovation.

Sealink into China

SEALINK Marine and Tourism has appointed the Gaibo Agency as its new distribution representation partner for Greater China - a market critical to the rebound of Australia's inbound tourism industry.

Richard Doyle, Sealink GM for Global Sales & Distribution, said the move aims to strengthen and rebuild connections with Chinese trade distribution partners, promoting and training them on Sealink's portfolio of "unique regions, diverse landscapes, tourism icons, wildlife, cultures and brilliant experiences to the high-value Chinese traveller".

Gaibo has strong relationships in the local market having formerly represented other organisations such as Experience Co, Wine Victoria and Apollo Motorhomes.

Grace Xu will head up the China-based team, supported by Jessica Xu, Gaibo GM, who will be regularly travelling to Shanghai from Melbourne.

Batik MEL rejig

BATIK Air Malaysia will not operate its planned nonstop flights from Melbourne to Kuala Lumpur over the upcoming northern winter 2023/24 season, with the flights now removed from GDS platforms.

However the carrier will continue to operate its daily flights from Melbourne to Bali and then onto Kuala Lumpur, using Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft.

Regent adds 128

REGENT Seven Seas Cruises is rolling out an extensive new program of culinary shore excursions in the Mediterranean.

The huge new program has been crafted in collaboration with local chefs and culinary experts, offering guests an "unforgettable journey through France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Turkey".

The shorex are part of Regent's Epicurean Perfection program - more details via 1300 455 200.

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NZ dreams big

TOURISM New Zealand (TNZ) is aiming to bid for a record 90 international conferences worth a total NZ\$135 million in FY24.

This will be a significant increase on the 84 successful bids TNZ made in the 2023 financial year, which collectively injected \$120 million into NZ's economy.

"TNZ will work hard to support New Zealand's business events sector to attract business that will also grow knowledge and collaboration across many of society's important subjects and industries," TNZ chief Rene de Monchy said.

Prior to COVID, TNZ grew its conference bids from seven in 2012 to 89 in 2019.

MEANWHILE, Business Events Wellington has hosted the largest-ever MEETINGS trade show, which attracted more than 1,000 delegates last week (**TD** 22 Jun).

DON'T YOU DARE PULL A SWIFTY

AUSTRALIA'S two largest states have moved to protect consumers from being ripped off by ticket scalpers to major events, such as Taylor Swift's upcoming The Eras Tour in Feb next year.

The artist, affectionately referred to by fans as T Swizzle, has already broken an Australian record this week, with close to a fifth of the country eagerly trying to secure tickets in the second pre-sale through Ticketek.

But with great popularity comes great risk it appears, with opportunistic scalpers following Swift's concert around the world, leading to the Victorian Government this week declaring The Eras Tour a 'major event'.

This event classification in Victoria means that consumers are afforded greater protection under the *Major Events Act 2009*, capping the re-sale of tickets to 10% above their original value.

The legislation also requires ticket package sellers to be authorised by the event



organiser, and individual ticket advertisements must also include ticket and seating details.

Meanwhile, NSW Fair Trading has written to online sales platforms, including eBay, Ticketek and Gumtree, warning them not to create "bad blood" by letting consumers get exploited at high-risk events.

NSW expressed concerns that Swift's upcoming tour, along with the FIFA Women's Soccer World Cup and the NRL's State of Origin, are at risk of re-sale abuse, reminding ticket sellers that

maximum penalties for breaching laws currently stand at \$110,000 for corporations and \$22,000 for offending individuals.

"Consumers shouldn't be forced to 'shake it off' when they're being ripped off, the days of buying tickets for major events with the plan of on-selling to consumers at exorbitant profits is over," NSW Minister for Fair Trading and Better Regulation Anouack Chanthivong said.

Swift has added one more show in Sydney and one in Melbourne for her Aussie tour in early 2024.

Birdsville in a bind

HEAVY rains in far north South Australia have put a dampener on next week's Big Red Bash music festival after forcing the closure of the Birdsville Track.

Road trippers will need to bypass the closure by travelling through the west of NSW, adding an extra day to their journey, while 30 travellers have already been stranded at a remote hotel.

BCD M&E releases sustainability guide

BCD Meetings & Events (BCD M&E) has published its *2023 Sustainability Guide: Global Insights* guide.

The document details global sustainability trends, including where each region stands currently when it comes to sustainability best practices in meetings and events.

Event planners can use the guide to learn what clients are looking for in regards to sustainability, how businesses can adopt a more holistic approach to sustainability, as well as how the industry can collectively make a positive impact moving forward - **CLICK HERE** to access the guide.

Deaner joins BE

SCREEN Producers Australia (SPA) CEO Matthew Deaner has joined Destination Gold Coast's business events ambassador program, BE Connected Gold Coast.

Deaner recently helped secure screen industry event, **SCREEN FOREVER**, to the city for an additional three years.

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APPOINTMENTS

WELCOME to Industry Appointments, *Travel Daily's* Thursday feature which has the latest job appointments from across the industry. If you have just appointed someone to a new position and would like to update the industry email appointments@traveldaily.com.au.

REPS Unlimited & DMC Reps has appointed **Michael Thomson** as its new Business Development Manager, ANZ. Thomson is a business development and account management specialist and brings over 15 years of experience from similar roles with Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts and Complete Travel Marketing.

After a 19-year stint at Hilton, **Guy Stolk** has joined Webjet's **WebBeds** brand as its new Director of Chains, Europe. Stolk will spearhead relationships with European hotel chain partners and lead chains strategy for the Aussie company. He has held senior roles at Hilton, most recently the position of Area Director of Sales Operations.

Anthony Fullerton has joined the newly opened **Tower Lodge** in Hunter Valley as the new Executive Chef, where he will be charged with reinvigorating the menu at the property. Fullerton has over 30 years of experience in the industry and was previously the National Product Development chef at Artisan Food Company Australia, as well as a member of the catering team for the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

Pro-invest Hotels has made three appointments to its revenue team, which sees **Donna Rodios** become the new Head of Revenue, **Kelly Brady** take on Portfolio Revenue Director, and **Kate Heather** welcomed as its new Portfolio Revenue Manager. Rodios will steer the revenue, management and distribution teams in her new role, while Brady will work closely with Rodios and take charge of the profitability policies across all of the company's properties. Meanwhile Heather is based in the Brisbane office, where she will drive the revenue strategy affiliated with the Vista Hospitality Group's property portfolio.

A star is reborn

CELESTYAL has revealed details of its new ship, *Celestyal Journey*, following its multi-million dollar refurbishment.

The luxury vessel offers 148 Balcony suites including more Dream suites than ever before, seven specialty dining experiences, eight bars and lounges, two pools, and two fully equipped conference spaces and a multi-purpose amphitheatre.

Celestyal Journey will set sail on 02 Sep, taking over *Celestyal Crystal's* program, starting with the Idyllic Aegean itinerary.

The Essence of style

A MIX of 32 new boutique hotel rooms and 20 uniquely designed beach residences will be on offer for travellers to the Sunshine Coast when Essence Peregian Beach opens its doors on 01 Jul.

Located 11km from Noosa on the edge of UNESCO-listed Biosphere, the new property features two pools (one with a pool bar), events and conference spaces, select accommodation with private pools, and Outer Square, the hotel's restaurant.

On-site parking, a gym and room service are also available.

Winners for Whitsundays



A FLURRY of fantastic prizes were given away by Tourism Whitsundays at its Whitsundays East Coast Roadshow earlier this month, which travelled to Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane.

Goway Travel's Jan Ta'ale won

a major prize holiday package worth more than \$20,000, including a Villa Azure stay at Yangaro, in Flametree, Qld.

In conjunction with Amadeus, the DMO also gave away a \$2,500 gift card to spend in the Whitsundays, with Charlie Ward of Adventure Travel Wellington declared the lucky winner.

Pictured: Tourism Whitsundays Marketing Manager, Laura Knipe with Trade Manager Suzy Bohan.

Phuket resort in Sep

NARAI Hospitality Group has announced the Le Meridien Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort will open in Sep, a property overlooking the Andaman Sea and situated on Phuket's coast.

The resort features 244 rooms and suites, pool access rooms, private cabana spaces, private pool suites, as well as a range of junior appeal, such as a children's fun pool and kids' club.

Sabre carbon tool

SABRE Corporation has integrated Google's Travel Impact Model (TIM) into its point-of-sale tools, enabling customers to see the carbon footprint of flights.

The data is now available on travel agency tool Sabre Red 360, and will feature on corporate online booking tool GetThere by the end of 2023.

Wallabies IHG

IHG Hotels & Resorts has announced a new series of rugby union experiences through its recently launched IHG One Rewards Access platform.

In partnership with Rugby Australia, members can use their points to nab the best seats at Wallabies matches in Melbourne and Sydney in Jul.

One of the experiences on auction is an exclusive 'Field of Play' tour for two, allowing one lucky winner and their guest the opportunity to get up close and personal with the Wallabies during their pre-game warm-up.

The offers are available **HERE** starting from today.



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