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Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest travel news, a photo page from *TD's Bon Voyage* event, plus full pages from:

- CLIA Memberships
- Collette

Advisors want all-in-one

TRAVEL agents are increasingly seeking new tools and technology to meet changing client needs and unprecedented demands on their time, a new report from Expedia TAAP shows.

Using a combination of internal data and agent surveys from Australia, the US and Germany, the study showed that one in five agents feel all-in-one functionalities are the top priority to manage busy work flows.

"The ability [for agents] to plan, book, and manage trips within a single portal is crucial," the report stated, adding the results underscore an industry-wide demand for efficiency.

Travel advisors have never been as time-poor as they have been this year, and in 2025 that demand is predicted to rise even further as travellers continue to see the value of travel agents.

In further insights for next year, Expedia data showed that all-inclusive hotel stays are on the

rise among Gen Z travellers.

Four in 10 of the demographic said they are seeking all-inclusive resorts as their preferred hotel type, while searches on Hotels.com using the 'all-inclusive' filter has jumped 60% year-on-year.

Travel agents are also encouraged to curate more experiences for smaller groups in 2025, with couples (53%) and solo travellers (30%) dominating Expedia bookings this year. *AB*

Bratton disembarks

SARINA Bratton has finished up her tenure at Ponant after concluding a contract as Chair for Asia Pacific and Special Advisor to the Global Chief Executive Officer, Herve Gastinel.

The veteran cruise executive has been with the French expedition line since 2013, playing a key role in lifting the profile of the brand locally, and opening its first Australian office in 2013.

TK lands in Sydney

THE inaugural Turkish Airlines flight from Istanbul to Sydney via Kuala Lumpur touched down on Fri afternoon, with the carrier offering four direct services a week between the Harbour City and Istanbul via Kuala Lumpur - the most to any port in Australia.

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Messinis exits

TASS Messinis has stepped down as the Chair of the Association of Travel Management Companies (ATMC), a key position he has held since May 2022.

Upon his departure, Messinis said it has been "a true honour" to serve as Chair, expressing his gratitude for the support he has received along the way.

"Together, we've reached new heights, from increasing our membership numbers to successfully launching initiatives that have strengthened our partnerships with VA, the BTA, GEFTA, and GBTA," he said.

Messinis will stay on to seamlessly hand over to an as-yet-unnamed replacement.

Do it all with Colette

GO EVERYWHERE with Colette's Black Friday sale, which has been extended to next Wednesday - more information on **page 9**.

Bali flight scam risk: report

AUSTRALIAN travellers booking trips to Bali have been warned they are two-and-a-half times more likely to buy fraudulent tickets than the average.

The claim was made in a new report released by Riskified, which also stated the travel sector is more at risk than other verticals because of the global nature of doing business.

NDC push flawed?

QANTAS' new distribution model (**TD 27 Nov**) is too complex and adds to an already fragmented and technically challenged audience, CEO of travel data platform Agentivity, Riaan van Schoor, believes.

The tech expert argues Qantas' model has elements of the failed SAS Scandinavian Airlines NDC plan, and the doomed NDC model of American Airlines - see **page six** to read the full opinion piece.

Some of the common ways travellers are being duped include criminals stealing credit cards to buy tickets and then selling them at too-good-to-be-true prices on online forums and the dark web.

'Buy for order' arrangements using stolen credit cards were also called out, with travellers often having their credit card details stolen when they pay for the fraudulent ticket.

The second most likely route to have scam tickets are those to the United States (two times the average), and to the United Arab Emirates (15% above average).

The crimes are most often perpetrated by organised gangs.

Become an expert

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) memberships for next year are now open, with travel advisors invited to become an expedition expert - see **page 8**.

Travel Daily ON LOCATION

DRESDEN

Today's issue of **TD** is coming to you courtesy of Viking, aboard a European Christmas Markets river cruise.

DRESDEN, in the heart of the former East Germany, is a spectacular destination which has almost completely been rebuilt since being bombed by the Allies during World War II. Highlights included a guided visit to the Green Vault, a famed museum where the intricate treasures of the former rulers of the Saxony region can be viewed under strict security.

The world's oldest Christmas market in the city square gave Viking's guests plenty of opportunity to stock up on unique Christmas ornaments - and try lots of sausages too!

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*PONANT PLUS credit is in Australian dollars (AUD), per person and can be redeemed only when booking one of the selected Cruise & Land packages inclusive of a cruise and a pre-cruise land stay. Information and price is correct as of 27 September 2024 but may fluctuate due to changes in surcharges, taxes or currency. Offer price is based on Deluxe stateroom on Deck 3. Guests who book on the listed Cruise & Land packages receive AUD\$800 PONANT PLUS credit off their cruise fares per person. To redeem your PONANT PLUS credit, quote code WESTMED, when speaking to your preferred travel agent or PONANT Consultant. Offer is not redeemable for cash. Offer valid on new bookings only made until 15 December 2024 included, not retroactive and unless sold out prior. Offer is subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Offer is combinable with PONANT's free solo supplement offer, PONANT bonus savings, PONANT Join the club offer, PONANT yacht club benefits, COMBO 10. Not combinable with any other offer. More terms and conditions may apply. Your booking contract is with Compagnie Du Ponant Pty Ltd (PONANT) and incorporates all the terms and conditions shown on au.ponant.com unless specified in these conditions; Ponant recommends that you read and understand your contract and ask PONANT or your travel agent if you require any clarification. *Edinburgh City stay is available as a pre-cruise stay and includes 1-night accommodation in Standard room at The Virgin Hotel Edinburgh 5* (or similar) including breakfast, lunch on the second day of the stay, 1 beverage package during lunch, walking tour of Edinburgh including entrance fees and English-speaking guide services, and transfer to embarkation port. Stockholm city stay is available as a pre-cruise stay and includes a 1-night accommodation in Superior room at Nobis Hotel 5* local standards (or similar) including breakfast including lunch on day 1, beverage package during included meals, transfers, visits to various Stockholm sights including fees, English-speaking guide services and transfers. Visit au.ponant.com for full terms and conditions. Photograph: © Adobestock.

Quantum in Brisbane

ROYAL Caribbean's *Quantum of the Seas* has arrived in Brisbane for its third season in Queensland, which will see the ship offer 22 voyages.

Visiting destinations across the South Pacific, New Zealand and the coast of Queensland, *Quantum* will operate a range of two- to 14-night getaways.

Travellers can opt for a seven- or eight-night cruise to the South Pacific, calling into Mystery Island and Port Vila in Vanuatu, as well as New Caledonia's Noumea, or stay closer to home on four- to six-night adventures visiting the Great Barrier Reef, Airlie Beach, and Cairns.

Quantum will also offer a 14-night cruise to New Zealand, taking in Bay of Islands, Tauranga, Napier, Wellington and more.

Awards galore for NSW tourism



MORE than 500 industry stakeholders gathered in Sydney last Fri night to celebrate their achievements over the past year at the 2024 NSW Tourism Awards.

Organised by the NSW Tourism Association, the gala recognises excellence in the state's tourism and hospitality sectors, awarding gold, silver and bronze accolades.

Big winners on the night included Symbio Wildlife Park, which took home gold in the 'Major Tourist Attractions' category; Tweed Tourism Company, in recognition of its outstanding tourism marketing and campaigns; and Mt Hay Retreat in the '5-Star Luxury Accommodation' category.

"The benchmark for the NSW Tourism Awards this year was high, so to be recognised as a finalist or one of our winners is a huge achievement," said NSW Tourism Association Chief Executive Natalie Godward.

"The tourism industry can at times be incredibly tough so well done to everyone who has gone above and beyond to deliver, whether that be experiences, food, or amazing venues."

The NSW Tourism Awards also honoured Caravan and Camping Industry Association NSW CEO, Lyndel Gray, with the 'Outstanding Contribution by an Individual' accolade.

Other winners on the night included Balloon Aloft, which achieved gold in 'Cultural Tourism'; the Broken Hill Mundi Mundi Bash, declared as best

festival/event; and Kestrel Nest EcoHut, celebrated for its focus on ecotourism.

Category winners will represent the state at the Australian Tourism Awards in Mar 2025.

"We're lucky in NSW to have such diversity with our tourism from unique country events to immersive ocean adventures, and hero Sydney experiences," Godward added. JM

Hamper full of travel

THE company behind the popular Chrisco Hampers brand has teamed up with Travlr to launch Chrisco Travel.

Using Travlr's technology, the two companies are offering deals across cruise and hotel stays, from luxury getaways to budget-friendly trips.

Flexible payment options are also in place through PlanPay, with deals in play on destinations such as the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Thailand, Europe, and a range of states in the US.

Princess Cruises voyages are also on offer, in addition to speciality Disneyland trips.

"We're thrilled to announce the launch, the new go-to platform for affordable, unforgettable adventures," Travelr founder and CEO Simon te Hennepe said.

"Chrisco Travel is here to help you explore the world your way, whether it's a dream cruise, a stay at one of our three million+ hotels, or diving into exciting local experiences," he added.

For more details, see [HERE](#).

Remembering Lisa

A MEMORIAL service to farewell former Tourism Australia Chief Marketing Officer Lisa Ronson will take place on 10 Dec at the Members Pavilion of the Sydney Cricket Ground.

"It is impossible to put into words the grief we have all felt over the past days as we begin to come to terms with the loss of our beloved Lisa," a spokesperson for Ronson's family said.

"Whilst there are still many tears to be shed, it is time we turn our attention to celebrating her inspirational life and recognising the legacy she left."

Ronson tragically passed away last month in an ATV accident on her family farm near Daylesford in Victoria (TD 25 Nov).

For more information on the memorial service, see [HERE](#).

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Nab this incentive with nib

NIB Travel has launched its Holiday Hustle incentive for travel advisors ahead of the busy holiday season.

The new promotion, which runs until 15 Dec, aims to show

appreciation for the hard work of travel agents, with a chance to win big prizes in time for the holiday season.

Every travel insurance policy sold by nib's partner advisors will earn an entry into the Holiday Hustle promotion, offering a one-in-six chance to win a share of the \$5,000 prize pool.

The grand prize winner will receive a \$2,000 prize, while four runners-up will each take home a \$300 e-gift card.

Entry to the promotion is automatic for every policy sold.

Advisors can learn more and view the promotion's terms & conditions by visiting the incentive page [HERE](#).

"Travel agents are an invaluable part of the nib Travel team, especially during peak travel planning periods," explained Nib Travel General Manager International & Partnerships Dylan Wilkinson. *MS*

G, that's a big call

FRONTIER destinations Pakistan, Bosnia, and Tibet have topped G Adventures' annual 'Where to Travel' list for 2025.

The ranking is gleaned from G's booking data, the latest travel trends, and upcoming events, with the three non-traditional destinations coming in first, second, and third.

More customary favourites, Thailand and Morocco, rounded out the top five, while completing the top 10 were the Philippines, South Africa, Greece, Portugal, and Japan.

G said it has seen bookings rise through Oct and Nov.

ATIA hails reforms

SLOT reforms at Sydney Airport passed by the Senate last week bring Australia closer to global best practices, the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) CEO Dean Long believes.

"With a slot-management system designed to meet the needs of today's passengers and airlines, parliament's timely action ensures these reforms can take effect swiftly, delivering greater consumer outcomes and fostering fair competition in our aviation market," Long said.

"The independent audit and ATIA's commissioned report have highlighted how systemic flaws in the slot system have allowed inefficiencies to persist.

"These reforms mark a critical step towards addressing those concerns," he added.

Misuse of slot offences are enforceable through the courts, which could issue civil penalties of up to \$99,000 per offence.



Window Seat

THE low cost carrier sector is rife with friendly trash talk, usually typified by Ryanair, but now Jetstar Airways and Scoot are getting in on the fun.

The Australian LCC recently posted a tongue-in-cheek call-out on Facebook, inviting its followers to snitch on fellow fliers exceeding its seven kilogram carry on allowance.

However fellow LCC, Singapore-based Scoot, did not miss the opportunity to tap in Jetstar's own goal, saying "some of us don't need to worry about being snitched on with our 10 kilogram carry on allowance".

Jetstar's own smug reply tagged Scoot parent Singapore Airlines, encouraging it to "come get your little sister".

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Industry says 'Bon Voyage' to 2024

LAST week, the *Travel Daily* team and more than 200 of our travel industry friends descended upon premium venue 12-Micron in Barangaroo, Sydney to celebrate the end of a wonderful year.

Radio personality Tim 'Rosso' Ross was the emcee and regaled the crowd with hilarious stories of his celebrity friends, his 80s childhood and holidays from a bygone era.

Guests had a blast toasting to 2024, catching up while watching the sun set over Darling Harbour from the balcony and even playing a game of air hockey and taking selfies in the photo booth.

Meanwhile, Mary Williams from Celestyal was the lucky winner of Journey Beyond's cruise for two around Sydney Harbour.

Four runners-up scored themselves a copy of Rosso's book, *Motel*: Luke Watts, TravelManagers; David Reeves, Ride the World; Peter Jones, HBX Group; Julie Golding, Ponant; and Louise Barker, Great Southern Outbound.

Thank you so much to our platinum sponsor CVFR, as well as our partners including Viking, Norwegian Cruise Line, and Journey Beyond.

MICHAEL Gazal, TravelManagers; Kevin Looney, Infinity Holidays; & Joe Karbo, itravel.



ANDREE Mitchell from Journey Beyond enjoying emcee Tim Ross as he delivered his opening address.



TONI Ambler, Travel Corporation Tour Brands and Neil Rodgers, Adventure World.



DEAN Long, ATIA; Ram Chhabra, CVFR and Trish Shepherd, Black Sheep Tourism.



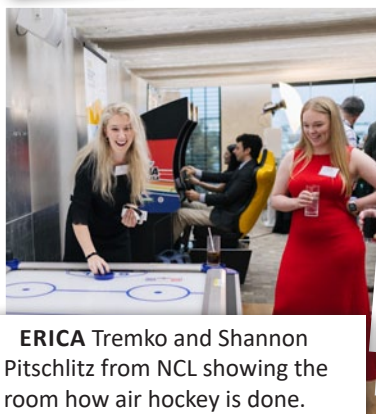
THE Oceania Cruises and Regent Seven Seas Cruises teams enjoying the night.



SARAH Lipkin & Sarah Harrison, Tourism New Zealand.



DANIELE Virtuoso from Regent Seven Seas Cruises showing off his Daytona skills.



ERICA Tremko and Shannon Pitschitz from NCL showing the room how air hockey is done.



EMCEE Tim Ross entertaining the crowd.



THE Norwegian Cruise Lines photo booth was a popular place to be on the night.



Qantas NDC plan is too complex

OPINION

Riaan van Schoor is the founder of the UK-based travel data platform for TMCs, Agentivity.

Got an opinion to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to feedback@traveldaily.com.au



LAST week, the global travel agency community reacted with shock and disbelief to the new distribution model Qantas hopes to launch in Jul 2025 (TD 27 Nov).

I had to double check the announcement was not perhaps made on 01 Apr, but it was not - this was for real and the actual intent of a major, global airline.

Someone was paid good money for this 'plan'.

So what about this new model is causing so much uproar? As it turns out, a few things actually.

It had elements of the failed SAS Scandinavian Airlines NDC plan (which never took off) and the most recent and well-known failed NDC model of American Airlines, in that it's almost as complex, and has a 'by invitation only' level.

The most talked about point was in fact the introduction of 'premium NDC' in the invitation only channel, so now we have EDIFACT, standard NDC via GDS, standard NDC via tech partner, and premium NDC.

Why oh why introduce this level of complexity to an already fragmented and technically challenged audience? It seems, because they can.

Unlike AA or SAS, market dominance is a given for Qantas. So it is sad really that the carrier will force this complex plan on their travel sellers, despite not even using NDC on their direct channels ("NDC is technology designed purely for the indirect channel" - in the FAQs of this announcement).

Interestingly, if you read between the lines of the FAQs, you will also notice the 'by

invitation only' channel really is a capacity issue for Qantas, and nothing else.

Back to the 'NDC for indirect channel only' issue; I can tell you now this will remain a continuous friction point as goals such as 'provide an improved booking and travel experience for your customers' will be difficult to realise if the direct channel remains NDC distant.

It brings back memories of those early internet days where companies had an e-commerce department.

My own take on this is that the plan seems to have been thought up by a company very disconnected from reality.

“The marketing lipstick over this very ugly pig has been spread on very thick indeed”

The so-called NDC benefits listed in the announcement are also far from inspirational.

The marketing lipstick over this very ugly pig has been spread on very thick indeed.

If you've read this far in the piece, you might be thinking I'm an NDC naysayer, but let me assure you of the opposite, as a technologist I've spent a frustrating 32+ years in an industry with so much potential, yet so little progress on the technical front.

I really want to see us progress, and I don't care if it's NDC or not - as long as it's making things better for the customer.

The biggest irony in this plan of Qantas is that in reality, NDC should lower your distribution cost, but with this plan, Qantas is very likely to increase its overall distribution cost.

Not only is the actual agency model complex and it will require a lot of resources to manage (hence the invitation channel), but they are ending up with at least four platforms themselves as per my understanding:

- Amadeus Altea internally
- Accelya for direct channel (and any NDC messaging)
- Spotnana for direct SME
- NDC with three different layers for the indirect channel

You don't need to be a 'techie' to know that is not a sustainable technology approach, nor is it a customer-centric one, and yes, it does exist, tech like Retailer.com is one example - one technology platform, customer-centric, multiple distribution channels.

Some might say Qantas has no choice with its various platforms; the industry is cluttered with gatekeepers and dominant providers and airlines have their hands tied.

Those who try to be different end up on distribution islands and fail, for example the Flyr airline.

But really Qantas, surely let's keep things simple, and with your travel sellers involved.

Get some of us in a room for a week and we'll have a much simpler plan for you, and yes, it will involve the checkbox that is NDC, don't worry.

I have not even talked about the lack of understanding of most airlines of the needs of corporate buyers, but I've run out of space with this piece now.

Riaan Van Schoor is a self-taught programmer, who got interested in the tech side of the industry and moved over to work for a GDS, and later co-founded Agentivity, a travel data platform for TMCs, with his best friend.

Follow him on LinkedIn [HERE](#).

Motley Richmond

HILTON has opened its first Tapestry Collection by Hilton in Australia location with The Motley Hotel Richmond.

The property, flagged to open in Aug (TD 29 Aug) features 80 rooms, as well as room service and off-site gym access just a short stroll from the property.

The Motley Hotel also features a restaurant, Ms Parker and Threads Rooftop Bar.

President Alan Watts declared the company is targeting a goal of more than tripling the number of Tapestry Collection by Hilton properties in Asia Pacific.

"The addition of The Motley Hotel Richmond to our Tapestry Collection by Hilton portfolio marks an exciting milestone as we debut this stylish, upscale brand in Australia," he enthused.

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MSC Cruises - Med & Northern Europe 2025/26

MSC Cruises' latest brochure is designed to entice travellers with the majesty of the Norwegian Fjords and Northern Europe and the history and traditions of the Mediterranean. Featuring overnights and longer stays in almost every port, the brochure highlights the brand's Grand Mediterranean voyages, which combine two seven-night cruises in the East & West Mediterranean. In Northern Europe, *MSC Preziosa* and *MSC Poesia* offer seven- to 14-night night cruises from Warnemunde in

Germany and Copenhagen in Denmark to the Norwegian Fjords and Baltic Capitals, while *MSC Virtuosa* operates sailings from the UK.



Explore Worldwide - 2025 Adventures

A brand-new brochure has arrived showcasing Explore Worldwide's best-selling trips for 2025. Readers can learn about the brand's new tours, including the Upgraded Collection, an expanded walking and cycling adventure range, as well as new destinations. It also offers a wealth of tips, guides and stories to give clients a deeper insight into the Explore experience, including a feature debunking myths about small-group travel and details on one of Explore's charity partners in Nepal.

With sustainability in mind, the new brochure features fewer pages, smaller formats, and a regional design to minimise carbon footprint.



APT - New Zealand 2025/26

APT's fresh New Zealand brochure is available now, encouraging travellers to discover the country's beauty, from the paradise of the Bay of Islands to the wilderness of Fiordland. The guide highlights a brand-new trip to Aotearoa's South Island, as well as accommodation recommendations, and experiences including a wild dolphin encounter, a cruise through Milford Sound, and an exploration of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. Travellers can enjoy a land

journey on APT's best-in-class coaches or embark on some of the world's greatest railway adventures.

First A321XLR nears for QF



QANTAS Airways' first Airbus A321XLR has progressed to the final assembly line at the manufacturer's production facility in Hamburg.

The new aircraft type will initially operate on domestic flights currently operated by 737 aircraft, offering a more comfortable flying experience for customers, with wider seats, larger windows, wi-fi, and overhead bins that allow for around 60% more bags.

The A321XLR's major airframe components, including the forward and rear fuselages, wings, and iconic Flying Kangaroo tail, have now come together.

The aircraft marks a significant milestone in Qantas' fleet renewal program, as it prepares to enter service in Apr.

It will be the first of 28 A321XLR aircraft on firm order (with purchase right options for more), as part of the replacement of the company's fleet of Boeing 737s over the next decade.

Qantas customers will be

the first in the Asia Pacific to experience the A321XLR, when the first of these next-generation aircraft take to Australian skies next year.

Qantas Chief Executive Officer Vanessa Hudson said the first A321XLR rolling onto the final assembly line follows more than two years of hard work and planning by a number of teams across the airline.

"These new aircraft are part of the biggest domestic fleet renewal program in Qantas' history, which is bringing significant improvements for customers and career opportunities for our people," she said.

"The A321XLR is a fantastic aircraft, which provides a more comfortable flight for customers, and the longer range will in time give us the opportunity to explore more non-stop routes and operate them more efficiently."

Iberia became the first airline to operate a commercial flight with the A321XLR last month. *MS*



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