

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NTIA 2024 WINNERS

Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product / Service

Viva Holidays

Innovation in Travel Support Services

Air Tickets - SmartRefunds

Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Wholesaler

Jackie Gordon, Viva Holidays, ReadyRooms, Cruiseco

Most Outstanding Travel Consultant Leisure

Emma Smith - Back Track Adventures

Rookie of the Year

Rachel Horsburgh, RACQ Travel

Most Outstanding Employee Engagement and Recruitment Program

Phil Hoffmann Travel

Most Outstanding Leisure Travel Agency - Single Location

Frank Ford Travel

Most Outstanding Mobile / Home Based Travel Advisor

Donna Jones - MTA Mobile Travel Agents

WE ALSO WANT TO APPLAUD OUR FINALISTS

Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group

Helloworld

Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network

Helloworld Business Travel & Magellan Travel

Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product / Service

Cruiseco

Most Outstanding Mobile / Home Based Travel Advisor

Margy Stimson, Sarah Fenton & Tracey Flower - MTA Mobile Travel Agents

Most Outstanding Travel Agency Manager

Michelle Hartland, Champagne Travel

Most Outstanding Travel Consultant Leisure

Blake Powell - Eclipse Travel, Pip Smith - Helloworld Toowoomba CBD,
& Samantha Renvoye - Clean Cruising

Most Outstanding Employee Engagement and Recruitment Program

RAA Travel

Most Outstanding Business Events Travel Agency

Phil Hoffmann Travel

Most Outstanding National Travel Management Company

Phil Hoffmann Corporate Travel & Sanford International Travel

Most Outstanding Leisure Travel Agency - Single Location

Airfare Geeks & Helloworld Travel Strathpine

Most Outstanding Leisure Travel Agency - Multi Location

Helloworld Travel Mackay, Mt Pleasant & Willows Townsville, RAA Travel,
Hunter Travel Group (HTG) & Phil Hoffmann Travel

Most Outstanding Mobile Advisor Network

MTA - Mobile Travel Agents

Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Institution

Helloworld Travel Academy

Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign

RAA Travel - It pays to cruise with RAA

Winners and gridders on travel's night of nights

THE vibe at the ICC Sydney was electric as the NTIAs for 2024 returned to the Harbour City with a huge contingent of over 1,300 travel agents, industry suppliers and stakeholders converging to unite for the travel sector.

While there were many winners on the night too numerous to mention, clear highlights included Travellers Choice taking out the Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network category (**pictured**), as well as Flight Centre Travel Group's Travel Associates nabbing the Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group (see **p4**).



Other worthy winners included the often successful TravelManagers Australia, which beat the field home to claim the coveted Most Outstanding Mobile Advisor Network gong.

On the individual front, Helloworld was dominant, with the high-profile Rookie of the Year award going to Rachel Horsburgh from RACQ Travel, while the Most Outstanding Travel Consultant Leisure was snared by Emma Smith from Back Track Adventures, and the Most

Outstanding Travel Consultant Corporate was claimed by Jaime McLeod from Mobilise Travel.

However, there could be no higher individual honour on the night than the Life Membership of ATIA bestowed upon Express Travel Group's Tom Manwaring, who was honoured for his 55 years of service to travel.

While refusing to be defined by age, at 73, Manwaring told **TD** that he will remain active in the travel sector, if not reducing his

personal travel load slightly.

See **page two** for the full story on Manwaring's achievements.

While Sydney enjoyed a return this year, next year's event was revealed to be Brisbane, surely the most important event to be hosted in the Qld capital alongside the 2032 Olympics.

Today's issue is also celebrating the inaugural Beyond Borders event, which was hosted on Fri in Sydney, a highly engaging day exploring the big issues before the frivolity of the NTIAs. **AB**

HLO grows cabinet

HELLOWORLD enjoyed a bumper night at the NTIAs on Sat night, scooping a mammoth eight awards on travel's night of nights. For the full round-up of HLO's success, see **page three**.

NTIA Special Edition

Travel Daily's NTIA Special Edition features 10 pages of news, photos and highlights from Beyond Borders and the NTIAs; plus a cover page from **Helloworld Travel Limited**, and full pages from:

- Princess Cruises
- MTA Travel

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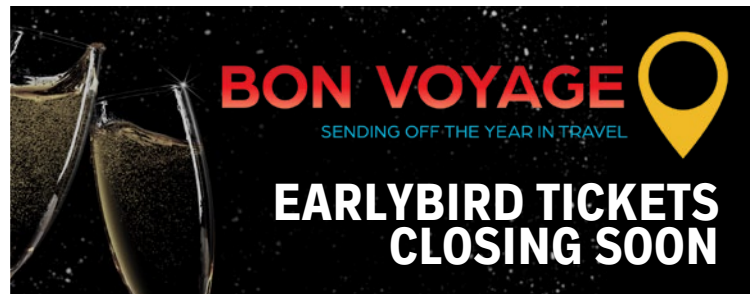


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Thanks for the contribution, Tom

A NIGHT of jubilation was completed on an emotional note, as Express Travel Group (ETG) founder Tom Manwaring was honoured with life membership of ATIA.

The popular industry stalwart is known to wear his heart on his sleeve, and his reaction to the prestigious honour was evident in his acceptance speech.

While Manwaring has pledged to reduce his hectic professional schedule a little bit, he remains committed to continuing his decorated career for a while yet.

"I'll still be doing my 60-hour week, I have a lot of shares in Helloworld because of the buyout [of ETG]," Manwaring told **TD**.



"I think at my age of 73, and I hate saying that because that's defining someone by age, but I want to continue on in some capacity - but probably not with as much travelling as I do now."

Reflecting on the strength of the industry, the man of the moment said that it remains that way to the current day because "travel is part of all of us".

"That's why we want the young people to come through and really experience what I have

over the last five-and-a-half decades, which has just been a phenomenal life...and I have made a lot of friends," he added.

Pictured: Manwaring with his life time membership award and Travellers Choice CEO and ATIA Chair, Christian Hunter. **AB**

Spotlight on cruise

VIKING and Uniworld Boutique River Cruises were the cruise industry's standout winners on travel's big awards night, with both brands retaining their respective titles of Most Popular Ocean Cruise Operator and Most Popular River Cruise Operator.

Taking home the sector's highest individual honour on the night, APT Group's Barbara Baron was named the Most Outstanding Sales Executive award in the Cruise category.

Meanwhile, Lindblad Expeditions National Geographic was also recognised during the gala event, receiving the Supplier Sustainability award, picking up the gong after Hurtigruten won the award at last year's NTIAs.

Wrapping up the cruise sector's achievements on the night, the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) took back its 2022 title, declared the Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Institution.

Princess 2026-27

PRINCESS Cruises will showcase its 2026-27 Australia & New Zealand program on Thu 31 Oct - for all the details, see **page 11**.

MTA congratulates

MOBILE Travel Agents (MTA) is celebrating team member Donna Jones for her big NTIA win - check out the **back page**.

Thank you for voting for us



We're honoured to have been recognised as the Most Outstanding Tour Operator – Global at NTIA 2024.



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 Travel Daily Training Academy

Taiwan 30
 THE ISLAND OF SOUL
 EVA AIR
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Helloworld winners

HELLOWORLD Travel Group walked away from the NTIAs with a host of accolades, including Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service for its Viva Holidays brand.

Frank Ford Travel was recognised as the Most Outstanding Leisure Travel Agency - Single Location, while Phil Hoffmann Travel won the title of Most Outstanding Employee Engagement and Recruitment Program.

When it came to individual winners, Jackie Gordon (Viva Holidays, ReadyRooms, CruiseCo) was named Most Outstanding Sales Executive - Wholesaler, while Emma Smith (Back Track Adventures) received the Most Outstanding Travel Consultant - Leisure award.

Additionally, the travel giant's instant refund tool, SmartRefunds, earned the Innovation in Travel Support Services title - see **front page** for the full list of winners and noms.

ATIA takes on travel supply slavery

ATIA will introduce an industry-wide reporting structure to help travel industry businesses meet government compliance obligations on modern slavery.

The move is in response to a government change halving the TTV reporting threshold, from \$100m to \$50m, for businesses to complete annual statutory reports on modern slavery.

This change is set to catch more companies in the travel sphere, prompting ATIA to take action.

Businesses within this threshold must outline the risk of a product or service inadvertently contributing to modern slavery through not paying a living wage, to forced labour and child labour, and what preventative checks are in place.

ATIA's new pledge will see it collaborate with industry partners to develop a unified approach to helping the sector report more cohesively, eliminating the



burden of brands needing to assess and address issue in the supply chain.

Speaking on stage at Beyond Borders in Sydney on Fri, Intrepid Travel Managing Director, Brett Mitchell, said modern slavery was a global curse, but one to which Australia is sadly not immune.

"When I first looked into modern slavery, I couldn't believe how widespread it is...it's one of the most insidious challenges we have in the travel industry and as a society," Mitchell said.

In Australia, there are more than 40,000 people in some form of modern slavery, with an estimated 50 million globally,

Mitchell added, many working for travel industry suppliers.

"There are many aspects within our supply chain as a travel industry, so as an association, to take a stance on this is incredibly powerful," Mitchell enthused.

Intrepid Travel is one of many prominent travel brands already highly active in spotlighting and shaming examples of modern slavery under a partnership launched last year with Flight Centre (**TD** 24 Aug 2023).

"Reporting on it is complex, it's expensive, it's time consuming, and it's difficult trying to do it on your own," Mitchell said.

"And there have been a few of us trying to work together, but to see the association step up and find solutions going forward [is really] something we're proud of.

"Not only is it the right thing to do for our industry [but] obviously the communities who are most vulnerable." *ML*

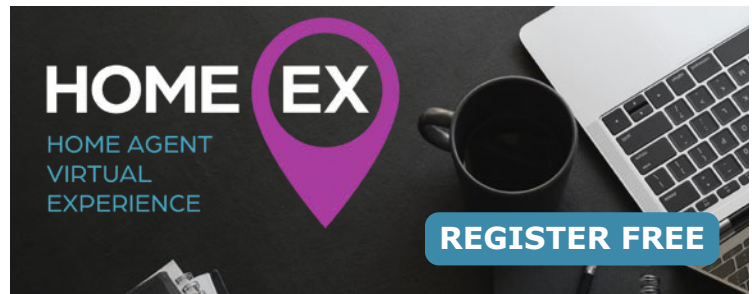
CONGRATULATIONS

The Viking team extends heartfelt congratulations to all the NTIA finalists and winners. We are proud to be part of such a remarkable industry that celebrates excellence and a shared passion for travel.

Here's to closing 2024 on a high and looking forward to an even bigger year ahead.



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Most popular in air

THE NTIAs' major sponsor, Singapore Airlines, took home the coveted title of Most Popular Airline - Online, while Lufthansa Group was awarded the same title in the Offline category.

There on the night to receive the accolade on behalf of SIA - which seized the title from last year's winner, Virgin Australia - was General Manager Agency Sales, Greg McJarrou.

When asked what made the carrier stand out among the competition, McJarrou said, "this is really about our people - our team do tireless work...[it's] a very humbling award to receive but it goes to them and their efforts".

Lufthansa Country Manager - Australia, Anil Rodricks, said securing the award for the second year in a row was "very heartening" during a "a year of tremendous transition".

Rodricks declined to be drawn on whether he would celebrate with large novelty pretzels.

Travel Associates claim best in brand

TRAVEL Associates' General Manager Rachel Kingswell said the brand's NTIA win as Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group vindicated its three-year effort to focus on "dominating in the luxury space".

The Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG) division took out the category, sponsored by Singapore Airlines, at this past weekend's NTIA Gala Dinner in Sydney.

"I'd call it the strategy of the last three years, but it has definitely come to life in the last 12 months," Kingswell told *Travel Daily* upon receiving the award.

FCTG Global Managing Director Luxury and Independent Brands, Danielle Galloway, added that the award was extra special as it was the first time the brand had taken out the category in its history.

"We are absolutely thrilled and incredibly proud about what this says to all of our people who are part of Travel Associates, to



all our leaders who are part of Travel Associates, and to all of the leadership of Flight Centre Travel Group," Galloway beamed.

"[FCTG Managing Director, Graham Turner] Skroo has got behind the luxury arm of the group [and] we cannot be more grateful for him allowing Rachel and I to bring this pillar to life for Travel Associates."

Despite the industry-wide recognition, Kingswell said she

was eager to get her teams in Brisbane on a video call to celebrate - and "maybe have a cheeky champagne with each other" - she was also keen for everyone to rest and relax with their families before getting straight back into it on Mon. *ML*

Kingswell is pictured above left with Graham 'Skroo' Turner and FCTG Global MD Luxury and Independent Danielle Galloway after the huge win. *ML*



APT Travel Group extends its sincere congratulations to all 2024 NTIA winners.

A special mention goes to our own Barbara Baron, who was awarded the Most Outstanding Sales Executive for Cruise!

We thank you, our industry partners for your continued support and look forward to working closely with you again in 2025.



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CLIA trains it better

CRUISE Lines International Association (CLIA) has claimed the mantle of Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Institution at the NTIAs for 2024.

In accepting the award, CLIA's Head of International Training & Development, Peter Kollar, said that while it felt great to win the accolade, the pleasing result was attributable to a team effort.

"It really is about the support we get from cruise lines and the travel agents that form our association, and without their engagement we would not be able to be as well as we are doing...to see it all come together is truly very cool," he said.



Domestic cruises feeding int'l sailings

SHORT domestic cruises are proving to be an "on-ramp" for Aussies to book longer fly-cruises, according to local sector leaders.

Speaking on the cruise panel at Fri's inaugural Beyond Borders event (**pictured**), hosted by the Australian Travel Industry Association, Norwegian Cruise Line Managing Director & VP Ben Angell said the number of Aussies travelling creates "a massive opportunity" for cruise.

"Think of how many Australians are going on an overseas holiday every single year, and depending on the numbers, it might be seven million, it could be more," Angell enthused.

"A lot of those overseas holidaymakers would consider a cruise...they just need to understand the true benefit of taking a cruise," he added.

Royal Caribbean Vice President & Managing Director Gavin Smith said the world-class



product available to Australians in their own backyard piques their interest in exploring longer cruises further afield.

"All the brands are here, everybody is here, and I think that's giving the consumer choice," Smith said.

This opportunity helps the trade "put the right guest on the right product", he added.

This in turn diminishes the risk

of buying the wrong product in overseas destinations like Europe, Alaska or the Caribbean, the Royal Caribbean head added.

Smith also reaffirmed the global appeal of Australian travellers, who are some of the highest-yield cruise guests in the world.

Australians are already the highest spending passengers across the Royal Caribbean brand compared to any other market.

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TravelManagers say the time is right for change

TRAVELMANAGERS Australia was a big winner at the NTIAs, taking out the hotly contested award for Most Outstanding Mobile Advisor Network.

Speaking to *Travel Daily* after accepting the accolade, the network's Executive General Manager, Michael Gazal, discussed what sets the TravelManagers brand apart from its competitors.

"We were finalists last year and winners the previous two and I think it's just consistent work and effort from the team," Gazal said.

"It's all well and good to put in a lot of support one week or one month but it's the constant work from across our business...that we provide to our network of 470 personal travel managers, day-in-day-out grind that helps each of those individual businesses succeed - I think that's a reason why we become a finalist.

"We're always looking at,



what's the one per cent that we can be doing in our future to help improve our business?"

Gazal explained that in many ways, the positive outcomes for TravelManagers have been derived from its genesis story.

"Our success really stems from our founder Chris Paulson when he started House of Travel, and I remember him saying to me many years ago, 'the ability of a

business to add value will always see a return in terms of financial, but look at where you can add value first, and the rest will follow,'" Gazal recalls.

The leader of the home-based agency network also noted that since the pandemic, travel advisors have been under increasing pressure dealing with immense workloads, which he emphasised is not sustainable for

any business.

"What we have noticed is that across the travel industry, advisors are stressed," Gazal said.

"Workloads are immense and people are making a lot of money and there are no complaints with that post-pandemic, but I really think the issue is the sustainability of that model."

In a bid to prevent burnout, TravelManagers launched Flowjo last month (*TD* 13 Sep).

"This is an end-to-end workflow that completely reinvents the way advisors take an enquiry, respond to the customer, deal with their documentation, because travel is a complicated and intricate business and one key stroke can cost you thousand of dollars.

"I think for us, this system is going to see our network happier, more fulfilled and use that time either to build more business, or actually have time out to travel and do other things." JM/AB

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Industry excellence hailed at NTIAs '24



THE Travel Associates team were thrilled to be named Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group.

THE excitement is probably only just starting to fade after a massive night on Sat at Sydney's International Convention Centre, where the hotly anticipated winners of the 2024 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIAs) were announced during a glittering gala dinner.

The biggest NTIAs ever saw 1,306 attendees pack the event ballroom, with the top travel agencies, sales representatives, destinations and industry suppliers highlighted alongside top-tier finalists in all categories.

But it was much more than just an awards ceremony, reflecting an ever-more united industry, which is bouncing back after a few dark years.

Major sponsor Singapore Airlines had a strong presence,

alongside many other supporters and sponsors including CVFR Travel Group, Cover-More, Expedia TAAP, Qantas, Royal Caribbean, Silversea, Virgin Australia, Wendy Wu Tours, Qatar Airways, Visit Qatar and more.

Lots more pics online at travelbulletin.com.au.



DONNA Jones from MTA Mobile Travel Agents accepts the award for Most Outstanding Mobile/Home Based Travel Advisor from Richard Styles of Visit Qatar.



ATIA Chairman Christian Hunter from Travellers Choice presents life membership to his predecessor, Express Travel Group chief Tom Manwaring.



CRYSTAL Vice President Sales Tony Archbold; Abercrombie & Kent Sales Director Alexa Papoulias; Regional Sales Manager Alison Banks; Sales Support APAC Kyah Tragardh; Vice President Marketing Michelle Mickan; Sales Manager Katrina Thirkell; and Crystal Key Account Manager Jacqui Tufala.



THE Incentive Lab team were overjoyed to be named Most Outstanding Business Events Travel Agency.



MICHELLE Black from Viking Cruises, named Most Popular Ocean Cruise Line, with Flight Centre Global GM Luxury & Independent, Danielle Galloway.



GREG McJarow from Singapore Airlines, the event's major sponsor, with CVFR Travel Group boss Ram Chhabra.



UNIworld Boutique River Cruises took home the Most Popular River Cruise Operator award.

Beyond Borders unites travel sector

STRONG support for the inaugural Beyond Borders conference hosted by the Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) on Fri saw senior industry figures rubbing shoulders in an unprecedented show of unity. Land, air and sea suppliers, agency heads, government stakeholders and destination representatives made the most of the opportunity to network at the first ATIA/AFTA conference to be held since the early 2000s.

As well as unveiling a host of industry initiatives as part of ATIA's Project A30 program (**TD** 25 Oct), the summit included panel discussions covering all sectors of the industry, as well as plenty of opportunities to catch up for the 350 attendees.

Participants included ATIA board members, with major plans unveiled by CEO Dean Long, Vice Chairs Flight Centre Travel Group MD Graham Turner and American Express GBT's Danielle Russom, Chairman Christian Hunter from Travellers Choice, and Intrepid MD ANZ Brett Mitchell (**pictured** left).

The **Travel Daily**, **Cruise Weekly** and **travelBulletin** teams were on hand for all the action and snapped these photos during the day, which kicked off a massive NTIA weekend - lots more online at travelbulletin.com.au.



RODNEY Muller from Skimax with Entire Travel Group's Greg McCallum.



SHELLEY Poter, Albatross Tours with Wendy Brockbank from MTA Mobile Travel Agents and Holland America Line/Seabourn's Helen Courias.



ANNA Burgdorf from FCTG's Luxury Travel Collection with Helloworld Head of Partnerships, Kate Cameron.



KATRINA Konstas from Beyond Borders' major sponsor AfterPay with Flight Centre Travel Group chief Graham Turner and ATIA's Richard Taylor, who emceed the event.



CHRIS Fundell from Globus family of brands with Amawaterways chief Steve Richards.



JASON Worth and James Sitters from Oceania Cruises.



COLLETTE'S David Farrar with Alissa Petterson from Avis Budget Group.



AMAZING Thailand supported Beyond Borders by participating as an exhibitor, with the team pictured from left: Siworn Supharattanadilok, Sherly Handjojo, recently appointed Country Manager Pichaya Saisaengnchan, and Sudarat Sepsamutr.



TRISH Shepherd from Black Sheep Tourism with Phil Hancock from Mint Payments.

Stars rub shoulders with superstars

THE finalists in the National Travel Industry Awards were treated to a special pre-celebration on Fri night, with Viking pulling out all stops to help bring the festive vibes at Sydney's Madame Tussauds. The gathering followed the inaugural ATIA Beyond Borders conference, and saw guests let their hair down as they hobnobbed with the rich and famous - at least in waxworks form.

More Beyond Borders and NTIA photos online at travelbulletin.com.au.



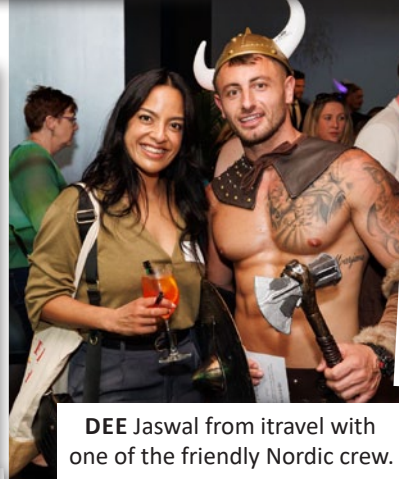
ELSA McLean from Regent Seven Seas Cruises with her special new friend, Chris Hemsworth.



THE Viking team honking their horns.



STUBA'S Rebecca Day updates her personal branding via a Viking tattoo.



DEE Jaswal from itravel with one of the friendly Nordic crew.



VIKING'S Keira Smith welcomes the finalists with ATIA CEO Dean Long.



GIA Acitelli and Gai Tyrrell from Globus family of brands with Amadeus' Kaylene Shuttlewood (with Michelle Black from Viking on photo-bombing duty).



KING Charles (and family) also popped in as part of his recent Down Under trip.



HOME and Away legend Alf Stewart with his idol, ATIA's 'three-star' Richard Taylor.



FORTUNATELY, Qatar Airways' Justin Kestel and Peter Lombardi from Lufthansa kept their shirts on.

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Intrepid is "elated"

WINNER of the Most Outstanding Tour Operator - Global award, Intrepid Travel, credited its whole organisation, as well as its industry partners, for its triumph on Sat night.

"We're feeling pretty elated, I think we're a little in shock too, I think it's going to sink in later," said General Manager Sales & Marketing Yvette Thompson.

"The dedication, the passion, the work that every single person has put into our business, and the amount of support we get from our partnerships, has been second-to-none.

"This is a reflection of what has been an amazing year."

Quizzed by **Travel Daily** Editor Adam Bishop on where the shiny new award will be stored, Head of Partnership and proud Queenslander, Meg Lowe, conceded her colleagues down south will likely become the custodians of the trophy.

"Definitely in the Melbourne office, that's for sure, but we'll definitely be dusting it off and making sure it keeps pride of place," she joked.

Intrepid is the second company to be recognised in its category, with the Australian Travel Industry Association last year splitting the Tour Operator sector into 'Global' and 'Specialised', with Albatross Tours winning the latter award for 2024.

APT was recognised with the 'Global' award last year.



Loxley locked in as NTIA champ



"I DON'T want to say I'm the best," were the words of Flight Centre Broadmeadows' Rosie Loxley, who was on Sat night unequivocally recognised to be the best in her field.

Loxley was named Most Outstanding Travel Agency Manager in the first award handed out for the night, beating out a hotly contested field, including Baris Celik (TAG), Leah Mullen (Tailor Made Travel Mt Gambier), Michelle Hartland (Champagne Travel), Rebecca McHenry (itravel Liverpool), and Sonia Jones (Sonia Jones Travel).

"I'm still a little bit in shock...I met some of the other nominees last night [at the NTIA finalists event] (see **page nine**), and they are absolutely incredible people."

Loxley cited Brene Brown's podcast *Dare to Lead* as one of the secrets to her success, when pressed by **Travel Daily** in the post-award interviews.

She takes over the gong from last year's winner Jacinta Blundell, from Helloworld Travel

Buderim & Caboolture. *MS Pictured* are Loxley and award sponsor, Silversea Director of Sales Cassandra Kerr.

Not all about size

JC TRAVEL Professionals Shady Mikhael took his company's win of the People's Choice Award at the NTIAs as a declaration the travel industry is not about size.

Mikhael said in an impassioned sidebar to **Travel Daily** that his business' personal touch has been its defining quality from the beginning.

"It's a credit to what we do, and it's a testament to the team," Mikhael said.

"We're not a large business, but we have small business values, where we can interact with our customers on a personal level and serve them in a delicate fashion, and make them feel important on every single transaction.

"There's a lot of big competitors in this industry, [but] JC Travel hasn't been about size."

Window Seat

WHILE many had their eyes fixed to those walking away with the gongs in the big National Travel Industry Award (NTIAs) categories on Sat night, one senior sales manager in the crowd was hyping up a different accolade.

Princess Cruises Head of Sales Operations, Brett Wendorf, was drumming up plenty of interest in the prestigious 'Golden Dome', or 'Domey' as some in the industry have come to know it.

The winner of the Domey is the attendee viewed as the "top bald person" on the night, with Wendorf offering his own expert observations.

"So much talent, so little hair. Good luck to all," he posted to his many follicly challenged connections on LinkedIn.



But the insights from Wendorf did not stop there, with the popular sales exec providing an update on his step count during the big awards show (see below).

NTIA Awards Marathon	
Distance	Avg Pace
1.00 km	13:49 /km
Moving Time	Calories
13:49	117 Cal
Avg Heart Rate	Avg Cadence
107 bpm	101 spm



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Well done to all the finalists