

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features six pages of travel news, including our **Sustainability page**, a product profile from **Tourism Solomons**, plus full pages from:

- CLIA
- A Force for Good

Web Travel ahead

BOOKINGS and total transaction value for Web Travel Group in the six months to 30 Sep 2025 are tracking well ahead of the same period last year.

An update released this morning showed 5.07 million bookings were made, up against the 4.3 million logged in the six-month period in 2024, while TTV rose by \$580 million to \$3.17 billion.

The strongest performing region for the WebBeds business was the Americas, with TTV increasing by 27%, while APAC and Europe also grew strongly by 12%.

TTV margins are tracking at 6.5%.

CVFR Holidays launches

LUXURY Escapes (LE) and CVFR Consolidation Services Travel Group have teamed up to create CVFR Holidays, a new white-label travel package service exclusively targeting travel agents (**TD** breaking news).

Available through the Luxury Escapes Agent Hub, benefits for advisors include being able to access ticketing with CVFR while also unlocking a range of trade benefits from LE.

These include deals with exclusive inclusions, flight ticketing with CVFR Holidays, direct quote sharing from the Agent Hub portal, and the option to create a marketing promotion from any LE deal.

CVFR Holidays will also offer commissionable tours, cruises, and experiences, as well as book and hold functionality.

"This partnership allows agents to access exclusive holiday deals, enjoy dedicated support, and



deliver an exceptional end-to-end experience for clients," LE Senior Manager Chris Brandon said.

The development is the latest phase in LE's quest to channel more collaboration with advisors, which only recently embarked on its first trade events early last month (**TD** 01 Sep).

The online travel company has also recently introduced several incentives and famil opportunities for agents, and inked a distribution agreement with Sabre (**TD** 02 Sep).

To celebrate the launch, CVFR Holidays is running an exclusive incentive offering the first three agents to make three bookings with \$200 in Agent Hub credit. **AB**

Intrepid signs Alexa

ALEXA Theofanou has been appointed by Intrepid Travel as its new Head of Marketing for Australia and New Zealand.

Theofanou's appointment comes after the company promoted Louise Laing to Vice President of USA Marketing.

CLIA floats its boat

CRUISE Month is underway for 2025, with CLIA Australasia kicking things off with Ocean Week from 05-11 Oct - more on **page seven**.

Star speaker line-up

INDUSTRY luminaries such as Cinzia Burnes, James Kavanagh and Toni Ambler will all speak at A Force For Good - see **page eight**.

Solomons hopping

THE strong domestic network of Solomon Airlines makes hopping between many different islands easier - details on **page nine**.

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Mint expands overseas

MINT Payments has expanded internationally for the first time, through a major partnership with The Travel Network Group (TTNG), one of the UK's largest travel advisor consortiums.

The deal will see the Australian fintech company power payment functions for TTNG's new platform Vision.

Mint currently processes more than \$3.5 billion in transactions annually for more than 2,000 merchants, with today's announcement giving it access to 1,100 potential new customers.

The fintech company's Chief Executive Alex Teoh (**pictured**) believes the UK is the logical first step for international expansion.

"Travel agents [in Britain] face the same payment workflow challenges we have solved in Australia: fragmented systems, poor support, and products not built for how they actually operate," Teoh explained.



"We know this industry, the regulatory environment, and we know how to improve it.

"The UK travel market still has most of its market share held by incumbent banks who do not understand the intricate requirements of the travel industry, and have not provided innovative, cost-effective solutions to help travel businesses grow."

Earlier this year the company went live with its Mint Protect service for agents, providing them with protection against chargebacks (**TD** 04 Feb). **MS**

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Globus appoints

GLOBUS Family of Brands has announced Johanna Raeder (**pictured**) as its new Head of Marketing APAC.

Raeder commences her new role from today, bringing her more than 15 years of experience in travel marketing to the firm, and replacing the departed Chris Fundell (**TD** 10 Jul).

She most recently served as Marketing Director for Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia, and prior to that held various senior positions at Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings and LATAM.

Managing Director Chris Hall said Raeder's broad industry experience made her the ideal fit for a company like GFOB.



Vale Sue Dedic

INDUSTRY veteran Sue Dedic passed away last weekend after a battle with brain cancer.

Dedic was part of the travel industry for more than 50 years in the US and Melbourne.

One of her career highlights was owning Jetset Travel Hampton with her husband Dush Dedic, which they sold, after which she worked at Beach Road Travel.

A funeral will take place on 09 Oct at 10am at WD Rose in Cheltenham in Melbourne.

QF loyal to Oman

OMAN Air and Qantas have introduced a reciprocal frequent flyer accrual agreement for their respective loyalty programs.

Members of either Oman Air's Sindbad or the Qantas Frequent Flyer program are now able to earn points and credits when flying on either airline.

The airlines' initial partnership launched in Oct last year.

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ASX parks Jayride

THE ASX has determined that Jayride's financial condition is "not adequate" to warrant a share price quotation, with the company suspended yesterday. Jayride's suspension follows a period of financial instability.

Hilton unveils brand

HILTON Hotels & Resorts has continued the rapid expansion of its lifestyle portfolio with the launch of Outset Collection by Hilton, with around 60 properties already in development. The new brand will be bookable from Nov, and will be pitched at upscale conversion projects. Properties will be designed for guests seeking "soulful, independent" hotel experiences, with a long-term growth potential of more than 500 locations across North America alone. The brand is the 25th for Hilton, with the first properties to launch in Utah and Chicago.

Air NZ happy with ruling

NEW Zealand's Commerce Commission has sided with Air New Zealand in its push to improve transparency at Auckland Airport, while ruling out a formal government inquiry. The airport's biggest customer by far, Air New Zealand has twice called for a clearer look at how Auckland Airport sets its costs, on the back of ballooning usage fees. Further, the carrier said it is not seeing value in investments being made at AKL to improve overall passenger experiences. "In 2023, Air New Zealand paid Auckland Airport NZ\$61 million [and] this year, that's risen to NZ\$144 million," said Air New Zealand CEO, Greg Foran. "By 2032, we expect to be paying them NZ\$476 million, with no effective oversight of how those costs are set before they are locked in." Foran added that without regulatory change, Auckland



Airport's pricing settings could result in 3.9 million fewer domestic travellers due to air travel becoming less affordable. The Commerce Commission also highlighted "significant gaps" in how Auckland Airport details how its investments are used, issuing a call for change. Auckland Airport said it was pleased a government inquiry would not be needed, defending its NZ\$5.7 billion (A\$5 billion) infrastructure program and stating it is working to improve the customer experience and add the capacity it needs for growth. Auckland Airport has in turn appointed Murray Burt as its new Chief Infrastructure Officer to oversee the long-term plan. *ML*

Get to know AGT

AUSTRALIAN Geographic Travel (AGT) is inviting agents to get to know its products by joining a webinar on either 17 or 24 Oct, both at 11am AEDT. The operator offers immersive, sustainable journeys across Australia led by expert naturalists, scientists, photographers, and Aboriginal guides - register for one of the sessions **HERE**.

Simple chargebacks

SABRE Direct Pay has introduced an integrated chargeback management service. Travel companies will now be able to simplify and scale chargebacks, enabling dispute resolution more efficiently across both issuing and acquiring. The new service has been developed with Chargebacks911, and removes the need for separate logins, manual data entry, or technical integration, uniting these workflows.

Enjoy more for longer!



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Club Med set to go wild



EXCITEMENT is building for the debut of Club Med's maiden foray South African safari product (**TD 04 Jul**), despite the first guests not checking in until Jul.

The all-inclusive resort operator last week hosted trade guests to an African-inspired lunch in Sydney, complete with entertainment performed by a tribal percussion trio.

Guests heard more about the dual-concept Club Med South Africa Beach and Safari Resort in the KwaZulu-Natal province, with one property on the beach featuring 411 rooms and the Mpilo Safari Lodge offering 75 well-appointed glamping tents.

Families will be front and centre at both resorts, with a huge range of activities available including dedicated family game drives and broad kids club facilities suited to children of all ages.

The dual-concept resort will "combine two sensational experiences in one all-inclusive

Club Med package", said Club Med Pacific General Manager Michelle Davies (**pictured**).

"This resort looks to not just provide you with a connection with the Zulu people but really looks to make sure the Zulu culture is in the essence of this Club Med Resort," Davies added.

While some logistical wrinkles are still to be ironed out, the concept will require travellers to spend a minimum of three nights at the beach resort before joining a coach for a four-hour transfer to Mpilo Safari Lodge.

South African Tourism took part in the event, presenting why Club Med will be a positive boost to tourism across the country.

South African Airways also took the opportunity to showcase its airfares and convenient flight timings between Perth and Johannesburg and onward to Durban to connect with Club Med's included resort transfers.

Davies **pictured** presenting. *ML*

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ATIA UPDATE

from Ingrid Fraser, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy



CHANGE is coming for travellers - and for the businesses that serve them. By 2026, Australia's travel landscape

could look very different.

That's when the Federal Government's new consumer rights framework is due to take effect, setting minimum standards for airlines, airports, and potentially travel agents.

Hang on - weren't agents excluded? Yes, that's right.

But it's not set in stone until legislation passes, which is why ATIA is still at the table.

The facts are very simple: agents don't set fare conditions, hold consumer funds, or decide refund rights.

Agents act on behalf of airlines. It only makes sense that obligations around these matters stay with them.

But consumer rights are just one shift on the horizon.

Travellers are also making choices through a new lens - sustainability, ethical supply chains and responsible travel.

Businesses are already adapting, and regulation is following suit.

That's why last week's launch of the ATIA Modern Slavery Collaboration (AMSC) was so significant.

It's a collective effort to tackle one of the most complex challenges in global supply chains, providing practical pathways for members who must submit Modern Slavery Statements, and those who want to get ahead of the curve.

A strong start to an important journey. And let's not forget passenger facilitation.

Border modernisation, airport upgrades and new systems will transform the traveller journey - and travel agents who are in the know will be best placed to guide their clients.

I will be moderating a special session at Beyond Borders next week in Brisbane that will give you a front-row seat on what's coming, and the insights you need to stay ahead.

It is an exciting time for our industry - and I very much look forward to seeing many of you at Beyond Borders and the National Travel Industry Awards extravaganza taking place in Queensland next week.

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Aussie Eco noms

ECOTOURISM Australia has announced that three ECO Certified destinations have been nominated in the Green Destinations Top 100 Stories - the world's largest collection of sustainable tourism initiatives, now in its 12th year.

Capricorn Coast has been entered in the Thriving Communities category, the Central Coast in Business & Marketing, and Townsville in Environment & Climate.

"These three nominations highlight the transformative impact of our ECO Destination program, which equips destinations to embed sustainability at the heart of their tourism operations," said Elissa Keenan, CEO of Ecotourism Australia.

Neutral cruising

HURTIGRUTEN is preparing to make industry history on 29 Oct with its first climate-neutral biofuel sailing.

The Norwegian cruise line's battery-hybrid ship *MS Richard With* will depart from Bergen on her regular coastal route to Kirkenes and back, with tanks full of 100% advanced biofuel.

The 4,000km round trip will be entirely climate neutral, according to Hurtigruten.

Global travel sector's eco victory

THE global travel and tourism sector has shrunk its carbon footprint below 2019 levels, while surpassing its pre-pandemic economic peak, new research from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has revealed.

According to the global tourism body, the industry's global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2024 fell by 9.3% since 2019, and now account for a 7.3% share of total global GHG emissions - down from an 8.3% share in 2019.

The majority of the decline in emissions intensity has been driven by improvements in efficiency, including a 16.6% rise in the adoption of low-carbon energy across the sector, along with a 5.7% drop in the use of fossil fuels.

Despite travel and tourism's environmental impact decreasing,



its GDP footprint grew beyond its pre-pandemic peak from US\$10.3 trillion in 2019 to \$10.9 trillion last year.

The results confirm travel and tourism's growing role in advancing environmental and social progress.

"This is clear evidence that travel and tourism can grow while reducing its environmental impact, but we need to continue to accelerate action," said WTTC

Interim CEO Gloria Guevara.

"Our data shows that 40% of our emissions lie in transport, and a further 19% in purchased electricity; we also know that 57.4% of our emissions lie in our supply chain.

"We must double down on sustainable fuels, renewable energy, and low-carbon infrastructure, and key to achieving this is effective public-private partnerships." JM

Kelsian Group sets new emissions goal

KELSIAN Group, Australia's largest integrated land and marine tourism and public transport provider, has released its annual Sustainability Report for FY25.

The company has set a target to reduce the Scope 1 carbon intensity of its Australian public bus fleet by at least 50% by 2035, with a pathway to net zero by 2050.

However, the report reflects that the group's Scope 1 and 2 emissions have increased



compared to FY24, across both its bus division as well as its marine and tourism division.

As of 30 Jun 2025, Kelsian's fleet included 204 zero-emission buses and one of the largest electrified bus depots in Australia in Leichhardt, Sydney.

Pure-air resort

OCTOLA Private Wilderness, an ultra-luxury retreat in Finnish Lapland, claims it has become the first destination globally to monitor ultrafine air particulates using research-grade tech, in order to offer guests a rare insight into the purity of Arctic air.

The initiative means the resort can "affirm the quality of our environment and share this reassurance with our guests in a meaningful, transparent way".

NEXT ISSUE:

Southeast Asia special report

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MONEY

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

AU\$1 = US\$0.662

THE Australian dollar has enjoyed a strong start to the trading week, exceeding the 66 cents mark and reaching two-day highs against the USD.

The modest boost has come in spite of an impressive bounceback by the US dollar.

While economists are predicting further gains for the Aussie dollar this year, targeting the 2025 ceiling at 67 cents, for now the AUD/USD remains stuck in a broad 64-67 cents range.

MEANWHILE, New Zealand's economy is not faring as well.

According to Kiwibank's Chief Economist, Jarrod Kerr, the Kiwi dollar has weakened against the Aussie due to the RBNZ's aggressive monetary policy tightening post-COVID, leading to a wider currency gap between the two nations.

The financial expert explained that, in comparison, Australia's more measured approach to interest rates has kept its economy steadier.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.662
UK	£0.491
NZ	\$1.133
Euro	€0.565
Japan	¥99.46
Thailand	฿21.46
China	¥4.711
South Africa	11.37
Canada	\$0.923
Bitcoin	฿189,105.94

Agents hit the road



THREE lucky Flight Centre agents recently enjoyed a week-long road trip through the US state of Nevada, thanks to Travel Nevada and American Airlines.

Conrad Machado from Flight Centre Northbridge, Jodi Small from Flight Centre Carindale and Abbey Shannon from Flight Centre Business Travel (**pictured**) were the winners of Travel Nevada's 'Sell Your Way to the USA' incentive this year.

The epic famil started in Las Vegas, where the advisors stayed at the newly refurbished Downtown Grand Hotel, which was followed by cycling through the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

Other highlights included visiting the ghost town Rhyolite, exploring the Goldwell Open Air Museum, driving down Nevada's Extraterrestrial Highway, visiting the Alien Research Centre, enjoying a kayak tour down the Colorado River to Emerald Cave and plenty more.

Flight Centre Carindale Team Leader, Jodi Small described

the trip as a "real eye opener", showcasing places that she had never heard of before.

"I had no idea you could see and do so much only a few hours out of Las Vegas," she said.

Corey Marshall, Travel Nevada Account Director for Australia and New Zealand enjoyed hosting the famil for the agents.

"It was a privilege to showcase the Silver State to these top Australian travel advisors, knowing they'll return home with unique and exciting stories of their firsthand off-the-beaten-track Nevada adventures," Marshall said.

"The 'Sell Your Way to the USA' program continues to be a key element of our overall destination marketing strategy, enabling us to engage, educate and incentivise frontline agents, ensuring that they have the right tools to best represent and sell the full experience that Nevada offers," he added. *JHM*

For more information on the Travel Nevada Trailblazer Program and Certifications, **CLICK HERE**.



Window Seat

JUST before skiers and snowbunnies hit the Vermont slopes this winter, herds of sheep and goats have been put to work at Jay Peak Resort to clear the vegetation.

Their remit involves clearing 10 hectares over a five-week period, with the goal being to gradually reduce the reliance on gas-powered mechanical mowers.

"They're great employees; they take a lot of lunch breaks, but that's kind of the idea," explained Andy Stenger, Director of Mountain and Base Area Operations.

The Magic Mountain ski area further south also used a herd of goats last year to prepare for the crowds of tourists.

Linkd boss in finals

LINKD Tourism Managing Director Kylee Kay (**pictured**) has been announced as a finalist in this year's Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW).

Kay is nominated in the Travel Communicator of the Year category, sponsored by TravMedia, for her submission 'More than a Bite of the Big Apple: Growing Awareness of New York State'.



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Island hopping in the Solomon islands

WHILE most travellers to the Solomon Islands springboard between the destination's main tourism corridors, via Solomon Airlines' domestic network, there is a great alternative way to discover the unspoiled beauty, culture and diversity these Hapi Isles offer – by inter-island ferry.

Ferries offer a unique way to explore this stunning 992-island archipelago with services connecting the capital, Honiara, with Munda, Gizo, Malaita, Choiseul, and the Marovo Lagoon in the Western Province, with many ports of call along the way.

Each destination offers something different, from vibrant markets and bustling ports to tucked away villages which seldom see international visitors, providing an off-the-beaten-path experience custom-made for cultural explorers.

The Pelican Shipping Company offers several routes connecting Honiara with

the main tourist areas of Marau Sound, Munda and Gizo with prices starting as little as SBD300.00 (approximately \$A54) for a ticket to Marau Sound, the stop-off point for Tavanipupu Island Resort.

For those looking for a very different Solomon Islands experience, Malaita Province, where shell money is still in use as currency, is a great port of call.

Regular fast ferries operate daily services between Honiara and the provincial capital, Auki, include the Auki Express and the Pelican Shipping Company's Pelican 1 and Pelican 2.

For those with more time on their hands, the Pelican Shipping Company offers fares from Honiara to Taro, the provincial capital of far-flung Choiseul Province on the north-western fringe of the archipelago.

Priced from SBD1100 (approximately \$A200) the journey takes some 40 hours with stops along the way including remote Papara, Sasamunga, and

Voza. Passengers can reserve onboard accommodation but do need to provide their own meals.

Affordable, immersive and authentic, travelling the Solomon Islands by ferry opens up a world of discovery far beyond the flight path.

Click **HERE** for more information.

NEED HELP?

Speak to the expert, Tourism Solomons' Trade Manager Australia and New Zealand, Richard Skewes, the go-to point for all travel industry-related enquiries:

Phone: 0412 524 699

Email: richard@ptm.net.au

