

## Today's issue of TD

*Travel Daily* today features six pages of industry news, including our **Corporate Update**, plus a full page from **Entire Travel Group**.

## Party with CVFR

**CVFR** Travel Group has returned as exclusive sponsor of the National Travel Industry Awards' after party in Melbourne.

Guests will converge at The Boatbuilders Yard in South Wharf, where they will receive a welcome drink on arrival.

A dance floor and multiple bars will cater for those who want to party the night away, while slippers will be provided for those who would prefer a quieter spot by the water to wind down after a long evening. *MS*



## VA strategy is "working"

**VIRGIN** Australia has lifted its net profit after tax to \$403.6 million for the 12 months to 30 Jun, despite aviation facing major headwinds (**TD** breaking news).

The carrier said that strong customer demand, benefits from its transformation program, and strategic hedging have helped insulate its financial performance, which included a 21% increase to net profit.

Meanwhile, Virgin Australia's efforts to grow its loyalty business saw Velocity revenue increase 8.1% to \$487 million, while EBIT rose 12% to \$143 million.

The airline also added around 800,000 Velocity members, taking active membership up 9%, with engagement remaining strong across its 80-plus partners.

Reflecting on the results, VA's CEO Dave Emerson said the airline's strategy of building a simpler model focused primarily on domestic and targeted short-haul international services was



clearly working for the business.

"That strategy, together with the continued benefits of our Transformation Program, has strengthened the quality of our earnings and positioned us well for the future," Emerson said.

Virgin Australia expects to purchase five Boeing 737-8 MAX aircraft and two Embraer E190-E2s in FY27, taking its owned aircraft mix to 39%. *AB*

## Sound day for Sonata

**OCEANIA** Cruises' newest vessel *Oceania Sonata*, has floated out at the Fincantieri shipyard in Marghera, Italy, on track for her debut in Aug 2027.

With work on her exterior now complete, attention now turns to the completion of her interiors.

Featuring 695 rooms and suites, Oceania's newest ship is the first of five vessels in the cruise line's Sonata Class, followed by sister ships *Oceania Arietta* in 2029.

See today's issue of **Cruise Weekly** for more information. *JB*



## FCTG's new Turner

**FLIGHT** Centre Travel Group (FCTG) has announced the addition of Gareth Turner to its board as a non-executive director.

Turner, who is not related to FCTG MD Graham Turner, has held senior finance and commercial roles with several ASX-listed businesses, including Infomedia and amaysim.

Earlier in his career, Turner built direct experience in the travel industry with finance leadership roles at Stella Group and Jetset Travelworld Group.

Turner replaces Rob Baker, who signalled his retirement at the 2026 AGM after 13 years on the board as a non-executive director and chair of the company's audit and risk committee.

FCTG chair Gary Smith said the board "looks forward to drawing on [Turner's] expertise as our company continues to evolve and targets near-term and longer-term growth opportunities". *JM*

## Our growth is human

**HELLOWORLD** CEO and managing director Andrew Burnes has hailed the growth of the company's network as a reflection of the enduring relevance of bricks-and-mortar travel agencies in Australia.

In an update to the market detailing new agencies brought on board and the expansion of current members, Burnes said the growth trajectory showed the ongoing value that consumers place on expert travel advice.

"[Our agencies] play an important role in helping travellers navigate an increasingly complex travel environment," the company's chief explained.

"While technology continues to evolve, consumers value more and more the reassurance, expertise and advocacy that comes from working directly with experienced travel professionals."

Further agency openings and member expansions already secured for the remainder of 2026 and into 2027 include Helloworld Elanora, Helloworld Wagga Wagga, Helloworld Toowong, Helloworld North Lakes, as well as Helloworld Whitford City - see more details on HLO's growth **HERE**. *AB*

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## Qantas overhauls loyalty

**QANTAS** Frequent Flyer is set to make the biggest changes to its status earning and retention since the program commenced, including allowing members to earn status credits through everyday spending.

From 08 Dec, members can earn up to 140 status credits per membership year across 10 non-flying categories, including up to 20 through Qantas points-earning credit cards and 10 through retailers like Everyday Rewards at Woolworths.

Other on-the-ground categories include: banking and home loans, insurance, automotive, home utilities, accommodation, holiday experiences and more.

The changes also allow Frequent Flyer members to carry up to 50% of excess status credits into their next membership year.

Benefits of the rollover will be capped at 100 status credits for Silver members, 350 for Gold, and 500 for Platinum & Platinum One.

Qantas' loyalty restructure will see status credits earned on the ground count towards Lifetime tier balances, and the retirement of sub-programs Points Club and Green Tier from 08 Dec.

The carrier also flagged that further changes will roll out in early 2027, including the removal of separate attain and retain requirements, new Silver tier



benefits and several changes to Lifetime milestones.

Meanwhile, Jetstar Classic Upgrades will launch in early Sep, giving members another way to use points for business seats.

Initial upgrade pricing will include 37,000 Qantas points for Melbourne-Singapore and 45,300 points for Sydney-Osaka, with upgrades including 30kg of checked baggage, meals and priority boarding.

The changes coincide with Jetstar's Boeing 787 Dreamliner refit, which will more than double business class seats from 21 to 44 per aircraft.

"Earning status credits on the ground will give members more ways to climb our tiers, while driving even greater engagement for our 700 coalition partners across banking, retail, insurance, travel and more," Qantas loyalty and customer chief executive officer Andrew Glance said.

The airline also confirmed new partner airlines will join the program in FY27. **AB**



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## Setting sail for Dubbo



**CRUISE** Lines International Association (CLIA) was in Dubbo, NSW this week for the Australian Bush Summit, bringing its Paddock to Port Alliance to the attention of political and business leaders nationwide.

Speaking at the event, CLIA's executive director for Australasia Joel Katz (**pictured**) emphasised the need for better regulations to support cruise operations, in turn protecting the economic gains it brings to Australian farmers, suppliers, tourism operators and other regional businesses.

"The benefits of cruising extend far beyond our ports and create employment for more than 22,000 Australians, so we need a government focus on sensible, practical and reliable regulatory settings to attract more cruise visits and protect these jobs," Katz explained.

Launched earlier this month (**TD** 04 Aug 2026), the Paddock to Port Alliance is a collaboration between CLIA and farmers, tour operators, travel agents and others to promote the financial contributions of a competitive cruise industry in Australia.

According to a recent economic impact report released by the organisation, the cruise sector brings in a substantial \$7.3 billion into the country annually, and supports 22,000 jobs.

Cruise lines around the globe reportedly spend around \$1.5

billion while in Australia each year, which has gone a long way to support suppliers, service providers, port operations and the wider visitor economy. **JB**





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## Gullivers' new MD

**GULLIVERS** Australia has announced the appointment of Steve McRoberts as managing director, as the Tulla Group-owned travel business prepares to enter its 50th year.

McRoberts brings extensive senior and commercial leadership experience across tourism and major events, including around 15 years as group executive - global marketing for Tourism and Events Queensland, as well as being an entrepreneur and business founder.

McRoberts is now tasked with strengthening Gullivers' core businesses, deepening client and industry partnerships, and the continued development of its emerging wellness division.

"Steve's appointment represents an important next step in the evolution of the business and our commitment to investing in its future," Tulla Group executive chairman Kevin Maloney said. *JM*

## Air NZ profits hit by ME

**AIR** New Zealand has revealed the Middle East conflict increased fuel costs for the carrier by NZ\$328 million (A\$271.5m) compared with initial expectations, while engine availability also had a NZ\$190 million impact on its bottom line in FY26 (**TD** breaking news).

The Kiwi airline posted a NZ\$242 million after-tax loss for the year, adding that it expects FY27 to be a "transition and recovery" period as engine disruptions ease and aircraft



maintenance costs drop by between NZ\$50-100 million.

However, Air NZ declined to provide a FY27 earnings guidance, citing "continued uncertainty" around the Middle East conflict and volatile jet fuel prices, which currently sit at US\$150 per barrel.

On a brighter note, passenger revenue increased 4.8% to NZ\$6.1 billion, while overall revenue also rose by 3.9% to NZ\$7 billion.

Air New Zealand said that it is seeing an encouraging resurgence in inbound demand and forward bookings into the country, which in turn is supporting a gradual recovery in its int'l network.

However, domestic and outbound int'l remains soft, particularly from corporate and government customers. *AB*

## PAL daily in MEL

**PHILIPPINE** Airlines has announced its Melbourne to Manila service will operate on a daily basis from 20 Nov.

The expansion marks an upgrade from the current five-times weekly flights, and will come in time for Australia's peak year-end travel season. *JM*

## Samoa Down Under

**AROUND** 20 Samoan tourism suppliers are set to come together in Australia next month for the Samoa Roadshow, which is scheduled to kick off in Melbourne on 07 Sep.

Agents will have the opportunity to connect with Samoa's accommodation providers, tour operators and rental car operators, while learning more about the country's attractions, unique visitor experiences, MICE offerings, and much more.

One of Samoa's well-known local entertainment groups, the Maeva Band from Return to Paradise Resort, will also join this year's roadshow.

After Melbourne, the event series will visit Adelaide on 08 Sep and Sydney on 09 Sep, before wrapping up Brisbane on 10 Sep, with all sessions to take place from 5.30pm to 8.30pm.

Attendance is free and comes with the chance to win prizes - register **HERE**. *JM*

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## Industry shows its support for Nepal

**AUSTRALIA'S** travel community has shown its support for travellers affected by the flash flooding which has plagued Nepal and China (**TD** 27 Aug 2026).

The Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has moved to provide communications toolkits for ATIA and CATO members to support clients currently in the disaster-hit regions.

"This is a terrible tragedy and our hearts go out to all those who are impacted," director of CATO and education Mira Yates said.

"It is also a difficult time for many of our members, who may be affected by the flooding in Nepal and China.

"We are in contact with DFAT and will keep members updated as the situation develops.

"Right now, our priority is making sure no one in the industry is dealing with this on their own."

In the latest update from



the Nepal Tourism Board, 35 Australians have now been reported missing, the sixth most-affected nationality.

Five New Zealand nationals have also been deemed missing.

In addition to ATIA's support, Intrepid Travel has launched emergency appeals to support the local communities in Nepal, through its not-for-profit, The Intrepid Foundation.

The tour operator will match all funds raised up to \$100,000, with all proceeds going towards the Australian Red Cross, currently on the ground in Nepal.

Through the funding, the Red Cross can provide emergency shelter, water and first aid.

Donations can be made **HERE**.

In a press conference yesterday, Foreign Minister Penny Wong said that DFAT officials are currently in Nepal trying to identify missing victims and reporting back to their families.

Smartraveller has advised Australians to avoid travel in the Rasuwa District, as well as the China-Nepal border.

Additionally, the advisory has warned that transport services nationwide will either be disrupted or cancelled, with Aussies encouraged to contact tour operators for updates.

The death toll stands at 157, with hundreds still missing. *JB*



## Window Seat

**TWO** country leaders' shared love for *Dragon Ball Z* has resulted in exciting news for fans of the anime franchise.

After discovering their mutual interest, French President Emmanuel Macron and the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, dreamt up the idea of a manga-themed amusement park and have now formed an agreement to build it in Paris.

Saudi entertainment and investment group Qiddiya will finance the project, which is worth €6 billion (A\$9.7b), and will be built near Cergy-Pontoise, northwest of Paris.

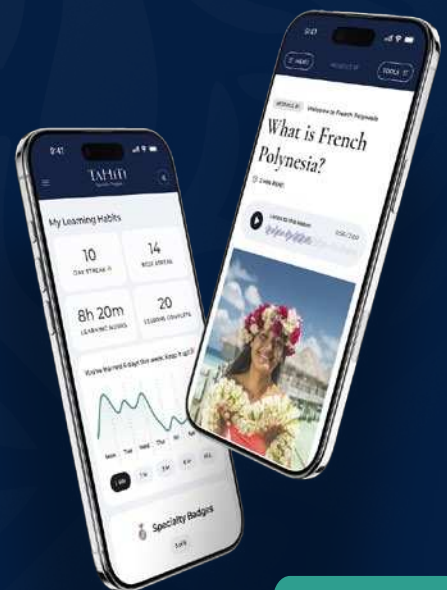
No opening date for the theme park has been set, but construction is expected to take several years - watch this space, *Dragon Ball Z* fans.

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## CORPORATE UPDATE

## CTM's posts \$348m loss

## EMBATTLED business

Corporate Travel Management (CTM) has released its delayed FY25 results (**TD** breaking news yesterday), revealing a \$348.5m FY25 loss "primarily driven by a goodwill impairment of \$357.7m in the European, North America and ANZ segments, and UK-related liabilities".

CTM also faces \$255.2m in customer-related liabilities primarily associated with the challenges in its UK arm, with underlying EBITDA at \$83.6m, down from FY24's \$116.4m.

The business also reported \$643.4m total revenue, on par with the previous year's \$643.3m.

The core operations of CTM reached TTV of \$9.59b, up 5% on the \$9.1b TTV in FY24.

It is predicted that in FY26, TTV will reach \$9.8b and EBITDA will hit \$113.6m, largely due to "resilient customer activity, high retention, new business wins and special project activity", CTM said.

## Qatar shifts gears

**QATAR** Airways and Uber have partnered to elevate the ground transport experience of its corporate customers, delivering more flexibility and convenience beyond air travel.

Members of Qatar Airways' Beyond Business can now redeem Qrewards for Uber rides, which are credited directly to the user's Uber wallet and able to be utilised for business travel. *MS*



Meanwhile, the first month of FY27 is tracking in line with management expectations.

CTM's FY25 results have arrived 14 months late, as a result of the major accounting issues in the UK that were revealed in Aug 2025.

The business expects to release its FY26 results early next week, which are two months late.

"Our focus is on continuing to deliver for customers, improving operating leverage and building a more connected global business positioned for sustainable long-term growth," said MD & CEO Ana Pederson. *JHM*

## Counting down to CT

**CT PARTNERS** is preparing to set sail on 'The Art of Travel', its 2026 conference, alongside Singapore Airlines, the event's new diamond sponsor.

Taking place between 15-20 Nov in East Asia, the conference opens at the W Shanghai The Bund, before delegates board *Luminara*, The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's newest superyacht, for a three-night voyage to Hong Kong.

Full event details and program updates will be announced in the coming months. *MS*

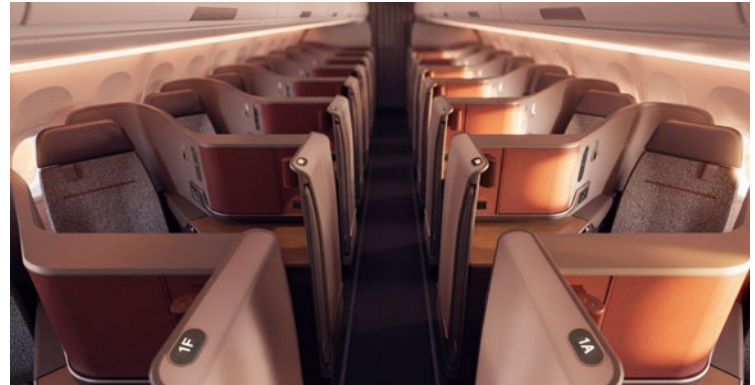


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## Qantas' business refresh



**QANTAS** has revealed the next evolution of its business seats for its future fleet of A321XLRs.

Business suites on each of the aircraft will be arranged in a one-to-one configuration in an angled herringbone layout.

Every customer will enjoy a lie-flat bed, a sliding privacy door, 19-inch screens and more.

Part of the largest fleet renewal in Qantas' history, the aircraft have been designed to transform the travel experience on longer routes, including transcontinental services to and from Perth, and on short- and medium-haul international routes.

The next-gen aircraft joining the fleet carry a higher proportion of premium seats than the aircraft they replace, as demand for premium travel continues to outpace economy, chief executive officer Vanessa Hudson said.

Revenue at the front of the aircraft is currently growing at twice the rate of economy across the airline's international network, Qantas noted. *MS*

## WJL's key priorities

**WEBJET** Group has shared its key priorities for FY27, such as strengthening its higher-value revenue, improving its core business, and lifting the pace of execution and consistency.

The company will focus on international air, conversion, economics and profitable bookings, as well as packages and hotels to boost customer value.

"Clear priorities, stronger accountability, faster decision-making and disciplined investment" are also on WJL's agenda for the year ahead.

Meanwhile, WJL declined to offer FY27 earnings guidance due to "the current period of transition and ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty".

More details on its FY27 trading and outlook will be released in Nov, with WJL predicting results will be "materially impacted" by lower airline commissions, RBA surcharging changes and lower variable revenue streams. *JHM*

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## SPECIALS

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**Costsaver** is offering 15% off a range of last-minute departures, including the nine-day 'Spanish Experience' from \$2,426, the 10-day 'Imperial Highlights' from \$2,745, and the seven-day 'Picturesque Portugal' itinerary from \$1,913. The offer is valid on new bookings with deposits made by 31 Aug, for travel until 31 Dec. Find out more [HERE](#).

Time is running out on the **Crystal** 'Explorer Fare' sale, with 10% savings on select voyages booked at least nine months in advance and paid upfront. Available itineraries span Japan, Italy, Canada and Spain. Click [HERE](#) to make the most of the offer before 31 Aug.

**Aurora Expeditions** is giving travellers up to 30% savings and air credits of up to \$4,300 per person on select Svalbard expeditions booked before 30 Sep. The 11-day 'Svalbard Odyssey' departing 24 Jun 2027 is included in the sale, along with the 'Spitsbergen: Realm of Ice and Wildlife' tour departing 03 Jul 2027, and the 'Jewels of the Arctic' itinerary setting sail 18 Jul 2027. Click [HERE](#) to make a booking.

**APT Travel Group** has launched Asia sales across its APT and Travelmarvel brands, both ending 16 Sep unless sold out prior. Guests can save on tours across Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Japan, China and Sri Lanka, all departing 2027. To see the full range, click [HERE](#).

The **Collette** earlybird sale is still on until 31 Aug, with savings of up to 20% available on over 60 small group tours worldwide in 2028. The sale is valid on tours departing between 01 Sep and 30 Jun 2028. To see the full range and make a booking, click [HERE](#).

Fiji's **Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort** has launched the 'Vanua Couples Experience', offering a curated stay for two featuring a secluded yoga session, a private river tubing excursion and a tasting tour at Kokomana Chocolate. The package is available until 19 Dec. For a full list of included experiences and to book, click [HERE](#).

**YouTrip** has a range of specials available until 10 Sep, such as 25% off eSIMs with Airalo, 10% off hotel bookings with Agoda, and 8% cashback on tours and activities with GetYourGuide. Click [HERE](#) to make the most of the deals.

**CLLIX Apartments and Hotels** is offering savings of up to 30% on stays of seven nights or longer across its Australian properties. The promotion is valid on new bookings made before 30 Nov. Notable properties include Brisbane Skytower, Coterie in Fortitude Valley and The Cullinan in Adelaide. Bookings can be made [HERE](#).

**Travelodge Hotel Melbourne Docklands** 'City Breaks' special is now on from \$169 per night, including 15% off the best available rate and a bottle of wine upon arrival. The offer also comes with flexible cancellation up to 24 hours prior to arrival. Book the deal [HERE](#).



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## Aussies flexible on travel

**MORE** Australians are changing their financial behaviours to ensure they can keep travelling, with most continuing to view travel spending as a necessity rather than an optional cost.

Research from Skyscanner found that 77% of Aussies are willing to remove at least one everyday expense to ensure travel remains in their household budget.

Just under half of travellers are willing to shorten a trip to save money, while 27% are opting for a domestic trip over international, and 94% are showing booking flexibility to ensure they get the best price.

"They're comparing prices, travelling during more affordable periods and staying flexible on dates and destinations," Skyscanner expert Jarrod Kris said.



The research also discovered that Gen Z is the cohort most likely to make the necessary sacrifices, with nine in 10 willing to change their habits and nearly three-quarters insisting that it is worth the sacrifice. *JB*

## Sea Cloud restructure

**HAMBURG-BASED** Sea Cloud Cruises has undergone a restructure and bolstered its leadership team, bringing on board shareholder Maximilian Block to the management team and seasoned industry exec Ralph de Klijn as owner's rep.

The business is consolidating its companies under one holding company while adding a newly formed advisory board.

"With the new structure and the expanded leadership team, we are strategically positioning Sea Cloud Cruises for the next phase of development," said Block.

Victoria Seidel and Adam Pazdzioch remain part of Sea Cloud's management team.

The new advisory board will be led by chairman Heino Schmidt, who will be joined by Herman Ebel and Oliver Forster.

While Germany, Austria and Switzerland remain a key focus for Sea Cloud, it is also expanding into other global markets. *JHM*

## Back to flight school

**QANTAS** Group has opened its new Emergency Procedures Training Centre (EPTC) in Sydney, which will be used to train over 10,000 pilots and cabin crew across Qantas, QantasLink and Jetstar each year.

Located at the airline's headquarters in Mascot, the 6,300m<sup>2</sup> facility is fitted out with replica widebody and narrowbody cabins, allowing crew members to practice multiple scenarios, along with door trainers for eight types of aircraft.

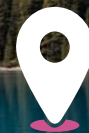
This is Qantas Group's seventh training facility operating across Australia, following the opening of the Perth facility in Mar.

It is also part of the group's \$100 million investment in pilot and cabin crew training. *JB*



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