NTIA 2026 | SINGAPORE AIRLINES

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Singapore Airlines is proud to have once again, been the Major Sponsor of the National Travel Industry Awards.

Our heartfelt thanks to our Trade partners' excellence and dedication that shapes the Australian Travel Industry.

Congratulations to all finalists and winners, and we look forward to welcoming your customers on board Singapore Airlines.



TRAVELDAILY

NTIA 2026

Tuesday 13th Oct 2026

NTIA Special Edition

Travel Daily's NTIA Special Edition features seven pages of news, photos and highlights from the **NTIAs**, plus a cover page from **Singapore Airlines**, and full pages from:

- **Luxury Escapes**
- **itravel**
- **Helloworld**

HLO thanks winners

HELLOWORLD Travel is thanking its network's winners and finalists who made the cut at this year's NTIAs in Melbourne.

The winners' circle included Air Tickets taking out Most Outstanding Travel Support Service, Cruiseco picking up Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service, and Clean Cruising clinching the Most Outstanding Independent Leisure Travel Agency.

There were also individual honours and many finalists to recognise - see **page 10** for info.

Envoyage double delight

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) network of independent travel agencies Envoyage broke through for its first NTIA with an impressive double win on Sat.

The division took out the high-profile categories of Most Outstanding Mobile Advisor Network and Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network.

Reflecting on the milestone victory, FCTG global managing director - luxury and independent brands Danielle Galloway said the achievement "meant so much".

"Our very special Envoyage brand, where 2,500 entrepreneurs call their home and more than $2 billion in travel is sold, was recognised for the very first time," Galloway said.

"I am just so proud - to our members, you are the heart and soul of the travel industry.

"To our crew - your support, care and commitment are what make this network what it is.



"And to our incredible GM Astrid Richardson, thank you for your vision, energy and the heart you bring every day - I love working with you," she added.

In a formal statement reflecting on the duo of awards, Envoyage said that behind every award was a team that shows up for our members every day.

"From the partnerships and support to the training and community that sit around them, it is their work that makes this possible," Envoyage said.

"To our members, you are the reason this network exists, you deliver expert advice and personal service to your clients while building your business on your own terms." *AB*

Get more at itravel

TRAVEL advisors looking for an agency network with more choice, flexibility and strategic ways to grow will find a perfect partner in itravel.

See **page nine** to learn more about its appeal today. *AB*

LE offers big rewards

EARN generous 12% commission on eligible Luxury Escapes tour bookings and a complimentary trip for yourself with Luxury Escapes.

To earn perks, advisors need only book 10 clients.

See **page eight** to find out more ways to earn cash and trips. *AB*

Singapore thanks you

SINGAPORE Airlines returned this year as the major sponsor of the National Travel Industry Awards (NTIAs), and would like to congratulate all of the winners and finalists.

See the **front cover** for details.

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Sisters the people's fave

ONE of the awards on the night that ATIA CEO Dean Long was most excited about this year was the People's Choice Award, which on Sat night was clinched by Sisterhood Womens Travel.

With the category receiving more than 4,000 submissions, the women-focused business took out the much-hyped category, secured on the back of their story of female empowerment.

Speaking with ***Travel Daily*** after the big win, travel operations and administration officer Sarah Segal said the accolade was testament to the trust the business had earned from its customers.

"This award is a huge thank you to our community of women who take the plunge and travel with us," she said.

"We give them the confidence to place their trust with us and that means everything and it is what we work very hard for."

When asked what success looks like in the rapidly growing area of women-only group travel, Segal said it was seeing the space grow and normalise over time.



"This award really is great recognition of the importance of empowering women to travel on their own without their husbands or partners," she added.

Moving forward, Sisterhood Womens Travel does not plan to reinvent the wheel, flagging "more of the same" to cater for the expanding demand.

"We are getting bigger and bigger every year and it is obviously a growing market, so we will continue to rely upon our clients to book and enjoy their travel experiences with us." *AB*

Flight Centre on brand

THE highly-prized Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group award was won by Flight Centre this year, clawing the honour back from Helloworld.

The accolade added to a healthy trophy cabinet at NTIA 2026 for the company, which also racked up wins for Envoyage and corporate division FCM.

Flight Centre global managing director Andrew Stark said it was "a proud moment" to take home the highly sought-after gong.

"The last two quarters of FY26 were really challenging, as it was for the whole travel industry, and I am proud of everyone in our brand for their resilience and determination during the back half of that year," Stark said.

"I want to thank our teams for being bold and brave this year, including everyone from product to risk, customer care, marketing, finance, operations and of course, our team of travel expert consultants," he added. *AB*

Cleaning the pool

THE Most Outstanding Independent Leisure Travel Agency award was picked up by Clean Cruising, recognition for a business that just "keeps on pushing", according to general manager Dan Russell.

The company's chief told ***Travel Daily*** that the award goes to everyone working at the business from the top down.

"We have an incredible team in Brisbane and other parts of the country - both in our offices and from home - and it is their passion, energy and dedication that has been incredible," he said.

"For us to be in the mix as finalists was something we were really proud of because it is a hot competition, but to actually win it was quite a surprise and is huge recognition for us," he added. *AB*





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AW shares the love

IT WAS Adventure World's ability to take its guests "beyond the brochure" to experience a destination's culture, flora and fauna that helped it secure the coveted Sustainability Award - Supplier for 2026, according to head of sales ANZ Elsa McLean.

While still basking in the win backstage, the brand's MD Neil Rodgers told ***TD*** the award was about whole-of-industry efforts.

"It was an honour to be in the field with those finalists and we are in this as a collective... and I am more than happy to pass on the torch next year and see another champion come on board," Rodgers said. *AB*



We did a tonne of work

TO WIN the Most Outstanding Tour Operator - Global, for APT Travel Group CEO David Cox it was the result of "about 100 years' worth of hard work".

Speaking with ***Travel Daily*** after taking out the high-profile award, family principal and director Lou Tandy echoed Cox's comments, adding that APT's ongoing success was owed to "always focusing on the customer".

"These awards come about because we have 100 years of experience and continual improvement that helps make us the very best that we can be," Tandy explained.

"We also have an incredible team behind us and the travel industry has always been a people business and I really think that is on show tonight."

When asked about what it will take to claim the prize again next year, Cox said the business has never rested on its laurels.



"It is fair to say we have a culture of innovation and we know the customer does not stand still and keeps evolving; our job is to evolve with them."

Tandy also teased that APT has some big surprises in store for next year, but would not be drawn on any specific details.

"You are just going to have to wait and see," she said wryly. *AB*

LE bags a double

ADAM Schwab's growing travel enterprise made a big splash at this year's NTIAs, sweeping two categories in fields brimming with big players.

Luxury Escapes took out the Most Outstanding Online Travel Agency and Most Outstanding Employee Engagement and Recruitment Program awards, with Schwab telling ***Travel Daily*** that it was humbling just to be mentioned in the same breath as such powerful operators.

"You don't really know how you're going, there are revenue and profit numbers but ultimately, being recognised among peers that we have huge respect for, like the Flight Centres and Helloworlds...is huge for the team," Schwab said.

"This is the Logies of travel in Australia...and you come here and you don't always win because the competition is so strong...so to get the odd win is really special to us," he added. *AB*



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Agents will walk away

AIRLINES are putting their relationships with travel advisors at risk through inflexible policies, complicated fares and poor disruption handling, according to representatives on a panel discussing loyalty at Fri's Beyond Borders Travel Summit.

Senior travel industry leaders said airline loyalty works both ways, and that travel advisors may be less inclined to sell carriers that make changes, refunds and customer servicing unnecessarily difficult.

"Airlines used to be more willing to give waivers and favours, and I think that builds a lot of loyalty," CVFR Travel Group chief executive officer Ram Chhabra said.

"Now the airlines make it very tough, some airlines you just can't get anything, and that destroys loyalty amongst the agents - they become nervous to sell that particular airline.

"They think, 'if I make a mistake,



or if I get stung, I am in a corner and I get screwed'."

Helloworld general manager consolidation Rohan Moss made even more explicit the consequences of airline rigidity.

"The reality is they actually stop selling those airlines," he said.

Airlines offering flexibility and clear communication during disruption are more likely to earn future business from agents, Moss added.

Difficult airline policies often influence the distribution of sales, panellists agreed. *MS*

Air Tickets is airborne

THE win for Air Tickets in the Most Outstanding Travel Support Service category was not underestimated by business systems manager Diana Mufic, who said the work needed behind the scenes to cater for disruption this year was immense.

"So much hard work has gone into all of the support services we have provided over the last year - especially with so many refunds - and so it has been amazing that our customers have had so many wins," Mufic said.

She added that the Helloworld division would continue to improve its offering for clients. *AB*

Learning from CATO

THE CATO Touring Academy Top Learner this year was Flight Centre's Robert Fletcher, who told ***TD*** that he had learned so much in just two years in the industry.

CATO launched the Touring Academy in Jun 2024. *AB*

An agent of Steele

IT WAS a case of second time lucky for plucky Adelaide-based advisor Rachel Steele, who stormed through the field to win the Most Outstanding Mobile/ Home Based Travel Advisor gong.

The Travel Society (Global Travel Network) agent told ***Travel Daily*** that she was "shocked" to win after being a runner-up last year.

"I really wasn't expecting the win but I am really happy to have won it," Steele admitted.

But do not expect this worthy winner to be still out on the town celebrating, stating she would savour the win "with a good night's sleep" with a rare night away from her two children. *AB*





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Connecting NTIA wins

CT CONNECTIONS was named Most Outstanding Australian-Owned Travel Management Company at the NTIAs for the second consecutive year.

The back-to-back win follows another year of heavy investment and growth for the Aussie TMC, which it said was continuing to invest in its people, technology and service offering while expanding its capabilities across corporate travel.

"For us, this recognition is about consistency and continuing to evolve, invest and innovate without losing sight of what has always made CT Connections special - our people and the relationships we build," founder and CEO Gary Reichenberg said.

"I am incredibly proud of our team and grateful to our clients and industry partners who continue to place their trust in us.

"This achievement belongs to all of them," Reichenberg concluded.



The recognition at the NTIAs arrives as the Connections Travel Group management team looks to outline the company's next phase of strategic growth.

Revealed exclusively by ***Travel Daily*** last week, the group is currently targeting further expansion across its leisure and MICE operations, including opportunities to acquire established businesses in those sectors to complement its distinctive Edge Connections luxury leisure and Totem Connections meetings and events brands (***TD*** 07 Oct). *AB*

A united front at the NTIAs



WHILE the NTIAs are no doubt hotly contested across all 39 categories, the evening also serves as a perfect forum for competitors to come together briefly to share a joke, a beverage or even a warm embrace.

Just take the two high-profile leaders **pictured,** COO and executive director at Helloworld Travel Cinzia Burnes and Flight Centre's global CEO of leisure James Kavanagh, who cheerfully smiled for the cameras at the photo wall on Sat.

Both companies are committed rivals, but these two prove that the corporate combat does not have to come at the expense of sharing a special moment on the red carpet.

A shining example to us all. *AB*



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NTIA winners celebrate in style

MORE than 1,300 travel professionals gathered at Crown Melbourne on Sat night for the biggest National Travel Industry Awards (NTIAs) on record, with winners named across 39 categories.

Flight Centre won Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group, its Envoyage division walked away with Most Outstanding Travel Agency Network and Sisterhood Womens Travel was awarded the People's Choice gong, to name just a few of the night's victors.

Meanwhile, Luxury Escapes won twice, taking home the titles of Most Outstanding Online Travel Agency and Most Outstanding Employee Engagement and Recruitment Program.

"Congratulations to all our winners," ATIA chief executive officer Dean Long said.

"Thank you to the generous support of our all our sponsors including Singapore Airlines as well as CVFR and Viking," he added.

Beyond Borders and NTIA will return to Sydney next year on 15 Oct and 16 Oct respectively.



FLIGHT Centre takes out the title of Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group.



CRUISECO was declared the Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service.



JAMISON Travel & Cruise, Queanbeyan City Travel & Cruise, Weston Cruise & Travel and Travel Makers secured Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign - ATIA Accredited Agency for Epic Travel Expo.



WANDER Beyond picked up Most Outstanding Branded Leisure Travel Agency.



VIKING walked away with the Most Popular Ocean Cruise Operator gong.



RACHEL Steele of Travel Society won Most Outstanding Mobile/ Home Based Travel Advisor.



THE Most Outstanding Global Travel Management Company award went to FCM Travel.



Congratulations

TO ALL NTIA WINNERS & FINALISTS.
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Viking makes it four

VIKING has kept its hot streak at the NTIAs going by taking out Most Popular Ocean Cruise Operator for yet another year.

However, never accuse the line of hubris, with a rep admitting the brand was apprehensive about its ability to keep its awards momentum going.

The accolade marked its fourth win on the trot, with the popular cruise line stating it would continue to drive business into agency stores and partner with the best to have a shot at an impressive fifth award next year.

Staying in the water, Globus family of brands added to its Most Popular Reservations/ Groups Team triumph when Avalon Waterways sailed away with the Most Popular River Cruise Operator honour.

The cruise line wins were rounded off with Norwegian Cruise Line picking up the Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign - Supplier for 2026. *AB*

Awards up in the air

THE major aviation gongs at the NTIAs in Melbourne went to Finnair and Emirates this year, taking out Most Popular Airline - Offline and Most Popular Airline - Online respectively.

It was a huge evening for Finnair's regional manager Sue Watts, who is essentially a one-person operation on the ground in Australia and NZ, telling ***TD*** her mantra is all about supporting agents around the clock.

With Finnair about to launch direct services between Melbourne and Helsinki, Watts said she was eyeing off winning an NTIA for online next year. *AB*

Borg pushes for service fees



NEWLY appointed Signature Travel Network general manager Damian Borg (***TD*** 11 Aug) has called for travel agencies to reassess whether their fee structures adequately compensate them for disruption-related work, in what has been a year of mixed fortunes for the travel industry.

Wading into the waters of fee-for-service, Borg said the traditional model was often designed around a relatively straightforward booking journey that does not take into account black swan events.

Circumstances such as this year's Iran war and the European heatwaves can force travel advisors to effectively do the same work all over again for free, he said at Fri's Beyond Borders Travel Summit in Melbourne.

"You set [fees] based on providing a particular service for a guest and a client that is going on holidays but are there considerations for incidents like what has happened this year, where you are having to almost replicate that entire booking journey for a customer?

"We talk about pressures on consultants and advisors, there's no bigger pressure than having to rework past files at the same time as having to run your business."

Borg encouraged travel agency owners and managers to consider the fee structures in their business with a view to covering themselves, particularly when visiting or transiting through problematic destinations. *MS*

Borg **pictured** on stage with moderator LJ Loch from ATIA.

Cruiseco delivers

HELLOWORLD'S Cruiseco brand emerged victorious in the Most Outstanding Wholesaler - Product/Service category.

In accepting the award, group general manager cruise Steve Brady told ***Travel Daily*** its success was down to keeping a laser focus on the customer and the agents' needs at all times.

"We are always making sure we are delivering product and packaging..to match what [advisors] are after," he said. *AB*

Window Seat

GUESTS arriving at Beyond Borders this year could be forgiven for thinking they had the wrong venue, as the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre also became home to swarms of gamers and cosplayers dressed in outrageous costumes.

From superheroes to Japanese anime characters, guests at Beyond Borders often found themselves sharing common facilities with eager gamers living out their passions through a combination of enthusiastic fancy dress and an impressive level of method acting.

This humble journo even had his heart skip a beat after being confronted in the gents by what appeared at first glance to be a large-framed man carrying an assault rifle and bulletproof jacket.

While a closer inspection revealed the weaponry to be plastic, the kung-fu stance was nonetheless activated and hamstrings twinged.



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Celebrating OUR NTIA WINNERS & FINALISTS

We are proud to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our businesses, teams and network members recognised at this year's National Travel Industry Awards.

Winners

Air Tickets • Most Outstanding Travel Support Service
Cruiseco • Most Outstanding Wholesaler – Product / Service
Clean Cruising • Most Outstanding Independent Leisure Travel Agency
Wander Beyond • Most Outstanding Branded Leisure Travel Agency
Jordan Heinrich, Clean Cruising • Most Outstanding New Talent
Rachel Steele, Travel Society (MTG) • Most Outstanding Mobile / Home Based Travel Advisor

Finalists

MTA • Most Outstanding Mobile Advisor Network
VIVA Holidays • Most Outstanding Wholesaler
Helloworld Travel Academy • Most Outstanding Travel Industry Training Program
Helloworld Europe Touring Sale • Most Outstanding Marketing Campaign
Helloworld Travel • Most Outstanding Branded Travel Agency Group

Congratulations to all our winners and finalists.

To our valued supplier partners who were recognised across the NTIAs, congratulations and thank you for your continued support.

And a special thank you to the agents who nominated and supported VIVA Holidays, Cruiseco and our wider Helloworld Travel family.

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