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Industry brainstorms career progression and succession plans

By Trish Freeman

The future looks grim for the travel industry if the trade doesn't start to tackle the issue of career progression and succession planning.

So says Cameron Dellow, the new owner of Maher Travel in Wellington, who believes many Kiwi agents have made no plans around succession as they head into their golden years. 'We also need to bring in more young people. We need to make the job sexy again,' he says.

Dellow's concerns are echoed by other industry identities, including TAANZ CEO Andrew Olsen and helloworld executive general manager Simon McKearney, who are brainstorming ways to tackle these issues.

Olsen says a panel is meeting at AUT University today to add two new majors – Travel Management and



Cameron Dellow

Continued on page 2

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Industry brainstorms career progression and succession plans

Continued from page 1



Simon McKearney

Tourism Destination Management – into the Bachelor of International Tourism Management programme.

‘No one would argue that the age demographic of owners is high and we need a succession plan,’ Olsen says. ‘We need to maintain our school-to-work focus but remove travel as a vocation and replace it as a career.’

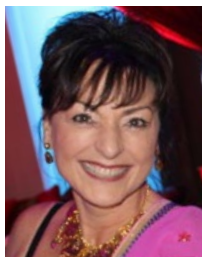
McKearney agrees, saying passing down businesses to staff has

been a fallacy in the local industry.

Accordingly, helloworld is also going to address the succession issue in training sessions timetabled for the next couple of months. ‘One of our goals is to create equity to pass on and we’ll do this by creating a value proposition in our support structure.’

High-flying retailer Deborah Kay from helloworld Rotorua, acknowledges the need to look ahead, and has created a ‘rough’ succession plan for her business.

‘Even though I don’t plan to sell for at least another 10 to 15 years, I hope one of my young staff members I have skilled up and mentored will be keen to take on my business,’ she says.



Deborah Kay

Tourism Australia boss: no change in NZ (but open to persuasion)

By Stu Freeman at ATE2016

Tourism Australia intends taking a steady as she goes approach to the New Zealand market, focusing its attention almost entirely on the business events sector, says managing director John O’Sullivan

However, he says TA is open to persuasion if there is proof of a need to pay more attention to the leisure sector.

‘We have kept resources in that market, with Jenny Aitken in the office there. If we think, and the state and territories say, there is a need to increase efforts or look at specific initiatives we are capable of doing that.’

O’Sullivan notes New Zealand showed a 6% increase in arrivals last year, retaining first spot when it came to numbers and fourth in terms of expenditure. When

questioned about a slight drop in market share (about 2% compared with other international markets out of New Zealand) he points out travel is competitive.

‘The Australian and New Zealand traveller have never had so much opportunity to explore the world. That’s a good thing in terms of engaging people’s desire to travel – further afield and closer to home.’

O’Sullivan says Kiwis continue to be a different sort of market than the longer-haul sources. ‘It is event led, it’s specific in nature. New Zealanders don’t say they are travelling to Australia, they say they are going to Sydney or attending the Bledisloe Cup. The states and territories are working New Zealand hard as well, so the Australian brand is still strong there.’

• For full ATE 2016 coverage, go to pages 7 and 8

TAANZ awards get the industry vote

A staggering 1200 votes have been received for the travel agency categories of this year’s TAANZ National Travel Industry Awards, reports Andrew Olsen, TAANZ CEO.

‘The number of votes is way up from last year. Travel agents have cast 600 votes for the supplier categories, with a phenomenal number received for Industry Representative of the Year. This category has been hotly contested with more nominees, and this year, a first for an industry category, industry representative finalists will present before the judging panel.’

‘Interest in our new category, Rookie of the Year, has also been substantial.’

Finalists will be announced on Monday, 30 May, when the full biographies of judges will be published on the TAANZ website.

Area manager South West Pacific of IATA Ian Lorigan joins the judging panel in 2016, replacing Belinda Jorgenson from Service IQ. The other judges are Simon White (head judge); Rydges Hotels and Resorts; Megan Roberts, AUT University; Lesley Immink, Tourism Export Council (TEC) and Debbie Martindale.

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Hong Kong Airlines: further stimulating the Chinese market

By Lisa Bradley

While Hong Kong Airlines' entry into the Kiwi market is set to capitalise on China's skyrocketing outbound market, the airline is hopeful 10 to 20% of its passengers aboard its 292-seat Airbus A330-300 will be New Zealanders.

And rather than create competition between Air New Zealand and Cathay Pacific, which also fly to Hong Kong daily from Auckland, airline assistant director – commercial Michael Burke says the new service, which kicks off on 10 November, will strengthen the Chinese gateway as a hub.

'We're not trying to steal the market. Cathay Pacific and Air New Zealand are very strong brands with loyal customers. We cover 30 cities in the Asia Pacific region and have a strong network across China, which is our advantage... the market is underserved and this will stimulate it further.'

Nonetheless, the full-service airline has considerably undercut its peers with return business class set from \$2204. The economy fares – from \$1224 – are on a more even playing field.

Hong Kong Airlines is just 10 years old and has a fleet of 30 aircraft. Its entry comes at a time when 120 million Chinese are travelling the world. New Zealand received just 365,000 people from this market last year (up 34.3% on 2014), but is tipped to get a lot more. In fact, Chinese spending is expected to outstrip that of our biggest market –



Michael Burke

Australia – in around a year.

Burke says the airline's November entry was timed to coincide with the Kiwi peak period, and popular Chinese New Year season. Acknowledging booming tourism numbers during summer were increasingly putting pressure on

infrastructure, he says it was the airline's objective to deliver through the shoulder and off-peak periods as well.

'Any airline can make money in any market for four to five months of a year. The challenge is not to lose it in the off peak,' Burke says.

'We will be helping to drive inbound to the off-peak periods by leveraging off our network. We think we will have the demand, but some of this depends on whether the country can supply the infrastructure.'

The airline is also aware dispersion of visitors away from the overpopulated tourist hotspots is another issue for New Zealand, and Burke says Hong Kong Airlines is eyeing Wellington and Christchurch if the Auckland run does well.

'We will also be working with Air New Zealand and Jetstar to get passengers through New Zealand,' he adds.

Hong Kong Airlines will also add an A350-900 to its fleet, which will not only enable the carrier to fly further and add frequency, it will add more seats to the New Zealand route if it comes here.

Meanwhile, Auckland Airport estimates the service will boost the economy by \$137 million and deliver 177,000 more seats to the route.

Taking in the Sri Lankan views

Innovative Travel's Michelle Baldwin (in conjunction with Bev Daniels of Singapore Airlines) has just escorted a small group of agents to Sri Lanka.

The group visited Colombo, Pinnawala, Kandalama, Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Dambulla, Matale, Kandy, Ahungalla, Galle and Kalutara.

Agents delighted in the scenery and UNESCO heritage sites and made friends with baby elephants at an elephant orphanage and young turtles.

Michelle reports: 'A highlight for the team was climbing the Sigiriya Rock Fortress – and the wonderful views from the top.'



The group discovers Sigiriya Rock (from left): Gina McCarthy, You Takapuna; Michelle Baldwin, Innovative; Donna Harrison, HOT Hastings; Tanya Chaffey, Chaffey & Szymanska Travel Assoc; Alisha Russell, HOT Ferrymead; Angela Pascoe, You Waihi and Bev Daniels, SQ

The attention is in the detail, says Trafalgar

Trafalgar is urging agents to ensure their clients are registered on its new Manage My Booking pre-holiday registration.

The system calls for emergency and holiday details and information that can give people a more personalised guided holiday travel experience.

Trafalgar CEO Gavin Tollman says the technology equips agents to cater to the specific needs of their clients.

'By pre-registering prior to their guided holiday departure date, guests inform us of their interests be it art, food, history, sport or architecture and also of their preferences for dietary and rooming requirements so our travel directors can better tailor each holiday to suit' he says.

'Logistically, by entering passport details, holidays are as seamless as possible from start to finish making hotel and flight check-ins or security checks hassle-free.

Most importantly, by having our guests' emergency contact details, in the unlikely event that this information is required, it is quickly available.'

Tollman says the new registration system also benefit agents.

'We – Trafalgar, our partners and our guests – are in this business together. The more we know, the better equipped we are to ensure that your clients receive the best holiday experience,' says Tollman.

www.trafalgar.com/registration

Australia



Whale of a time

Rachael Martin has been more confident to promote her company's whale watching cruises at ATE this year than she has been in the past.

'Obviously these are wild animals and we can't guarantee sightings,' says Martin, general manager of Wildlife Coast Cruises. 'But we are seeing that whale numbers are increasing every year and we are more comfortable promoting the cruises to the international market.'

'We're sitting at an 80% success rate now.'

Wildlife Coast Cruises operates primarily around Philip Island, Victoria, heading out from Cowes township. The vessel Kasey Lee can seat 120 people and a seal watching cruise is two hours long. The company also operates Cape Woolamai Cruises, concentrating on the dramatic cliffs and caves out of San Remo.

www.wildlifecoastcruises.com.au



Rachael Martin... more confident about spotting whales

Resort adds element of luxury



David Jones

The newly opened Elements of Byron has added a new level of luxury accommodation to the coastal New South Wales region, some 45 minutes drive from Coolangatta Airport on the Gold Coast.

'We are so accessible from the Gold Coast, yet it feels like a world away,' says David Jones, sales and marketing manager for the resort.

He says Byron itself has amazing surf beaches (such as The Pass), a thriving paddock to plate sector, and is a touch of the Bohemian. 'Elements of Byron has 103 villas spread through eucalyptus forest, rainforest and beach. We've got special touches like cantilevered day beds over a wading pool, a big fire pit for evening drinks and sunrise yoga on the beachfront.'



Elements of Byron features daybeds over a pool

He says the resort also offers horse riding on the beach and has a heritage train that runs from Elements to the township.

www.elementsofbyron.com.au

Nine courses for repeat visitors

A Progressive Degustation Walk offered by Hidden Secrets Tours is ideal for repeat Kiwi clients visiting Melbourne, says the company's proprietor Jane Sweetman.

'We realise people visiting Melbourne for the first time will want to eat at the well known restaurants and the places they have read and heard about. But this is a way for repeat visitors to find different ideas and products, different tastes, decors and service styles.'

The degustation tour visits three different



Fiona Sweetman

establishments (from a collective of eight) and guests try three food and wine matches at each place.

'For example we might combine European, Japanese and Peruvian in one night,' says Sweetman.

The tours run from 5pm to 8pm. 'Melbourne restaurants are so busy – we do the tour early so that they can look after us.'

Hidden Secrets Tours also runs a well established Lanes & Arcades Tour and a Café Culture Walk.

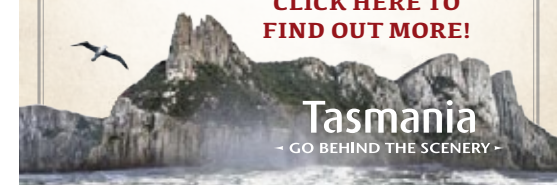
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Queensland outback tours selling out quickly

New Zealand travel agents are being urged to book their clients early if they want to take part in one of Outback Aussie Tours' longer experiences next year, after a number of 2016 itineraries sold out quickly.

The company's business development manager, Anita Clark, says the 17 day Journey of the Gulf Savannah and the 12 day Cape York and Torres Strait Tour have sold out for this year.

Departures for both have been extended from four in 2016 to six in 2017.

'Our message to the New Zealand trade is to get in early if they have clients who want one of these more experiential tours.'

The Gulf Savannah tour is available in both 15 and 17-day versions, but those who take the longer trip receive four different rail experiences and a four-wheel drive journey, usually staying in motel-style accommodation with ensuite.

'We are seeing a renewed interest in

the outback,' says Clark. 'We work with a mature age market and they are perhaps staying closer to home, but they still want adventure and they are looking for something on the exotic side. Outback Queensland fits with that, people don't know a lot about it and there is always something new.'

Outback Aussie Tours is owned by Alan and Sue Smith, and works with local operators to

develop new and interesting attractions and trips.

New in the 2017 brochure, launched in preview form at ATE this week, is the Central West Discovery (available as a nine or 11-day itinerary).

'This is ideal for Kiwis looking for something different,' says Clark. 'It includes an indigenous experience, National Park and dinosaurs – so it ticks all the boxes.'

www.outbackaussietours.com.au



Anita Clark



Eloise Chaffers... the hideaway will host three Kiwi weddings this year

Public appearance for Hideaway

Great Keppel Island Hideaway made its first appearance at ATE this year and is trade ready, with a keen eye on the New Zealand market.

Eloise Chaffers, functions and marketing, says the 'back to basics' hideaway is seeing interest from this market, including three Kiwi weddings confirmed for this year.

The property on the Southern Great Barrier Reef has 12 cabins, six beachfront, and two fully self contained holiday houses. It has a licensed bar and bistro and offers a meal package.

www.greatkeppelislandhideaway.com.au

Out and about...



At the Western Australia stand during the Australian Tourism Exchange... Jenny Wallis, Flight Centre; Hayley Price, and Rachel Pedder, Air New Zealand; Louise Frend, Tourism WA.



Catching up at a function during ATE this week... Jodie Burnard, Flight Centre; Carmen White, Cruise Whitsundays; Jason Buckley, helloworld

WA campaign gives agents new ways to sell the state

Western Australia will launch a new consumer campaign on 10 June designed to drive people towards special experiences in the state.

Just Another Day in WA will be under the well-established umbrella branding Experience Extraordinary and Tourism Western Australia chief executive officer Stephanie Buckland expects it to resonate with the New Zealand market.

'This is about developing content that is personal – giving visitors personal experiences and then capturing those experiences and emotional responses.'

Buckland says the campaign will have three layers. The first is the roll out of broadcast material through television and possibly movie theatres, the second is the development of digital material that can be accessed through personal devices, and the third will be user generated content.

'That content will be generated, initially, through a competition. We'll be encouraging people to submit images, stories and videos and we will be seeking this from both consumers and operators in WA.'

Buckland says the content will provide excellent opportunities for agents, who can utilise the advocacy to encourage their clients to visit Western Australia. 'And when trade are being hosted on famils they will be able to create their own content and share it with their clients.'

More details of the campaign will be released soon.

Swiss festival marks an historic 50 years

One of the world's biggest annual jazz festivals, the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, will celebrate its 50th anniversary this July.

What started as a humble three-day event at La Geneva's Montreux Casino in 1967, has grown into a two-week music festival featuring the world's biggest names in jazz, blues, rock, soul and pop, including Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, Nina Simone, Count Basie, Keith Jarrett, Queen, Led Zeppelin, Prince and Portishead.

Entertaining about 250,000 visitors annually, this year's event (from 1 to 16 July) will feature a line up of artists across its four venues of Casino Barrière, Stravinski Hall, Montroux Jazz Lab and Montreux Jazz Club to commemorate the festival's milestone.

Director of Switzerland Tourism, Mark Wettstein, says not only will visitors enjoy the line ups, but a number of projects will ensure the city is drenched in music and festivities to celebrate the occasion.

Some of the big names and new blood performing this year include Neil Young, PJ Harvey, Sigur Rós, Lana Del Rey, M83, Muse, Ernest Ranglin and Friends, Scofield Mehldau Guiliana, Christian Sco, Jean-Michel Jarre, Future, Simply Red,



Beirut and Grimes. To commemorate the occasion, a book entitled 50 Summers of Music will be published.

www.montreuxjazzfestival.com

In a galaxy not so far away...

The Star Wars Celebration will be held at ExCeL Centre, London 15 to 17 July 2016. This is described as 'the ultimate four-day Star Wars fan experience' and will be filled with entertainment, celebrity appearances, stage shows, panels, interactive events, screenings and exclusive Star Wars first looks and sneak peeks.

starwarsinquiry@reedexpo.com

Happy birthday, Ma'am

Clients can celebrate The Queen's 90th Birthday in style at The Savoy in London.

The Fairmont-managed hotel is launching A Royal Afternoon Tea in June in collaboration with former royal chef, Darren McGrady.

The menu will represent what the reigning monarch enjoys at home, including jam pennies; chocolate birthday cake (the recipe of which dates back to Queen Victoria's chef); and Her Majesty's absolute favourite, the chocolate biscuit cake chosen by Prince William for his groom's cake. The afternoon tea will be available from 9 June 2016 until the end of the month and is priced from A\$100 per person.

McGrady was personal chef to Queen Elizabeth II, Diana, Princess of Wales, and Princes William and Harry for 15 years. Hewill make a guest appearance on 11 June.

The Savoy is also offering a Royal Stay during June, which includes accommodation in a deluxe double room, breakfast for two and cocktails for A\$1200.



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www.railplus.co.nz

Vanuatu launches a positive new era

Vanuatu Tourism Office unveiled its \$500,000 promotional campaign to the trade this week, highlighting growing optimism the once-troubled destination has turned the corner.

The campaign, to be launched to the public on 30 May and aimed largely at couples, builds on the country's brand Discover What Matters with the slug 'it's been right in front of you all along'. It asks the public to reconnect with what truly matters by showing them the important things in life is there, waiting, in Vanuatu.

Revealing the concept to around 20 industry representatives at the Pullman Hotel in Auckland, tourism office representative Jacquie Carson says the campaign will be seen in print, digital media, tactical deals with wholesalers and retailers and a 'huge' 30-second television commercial. 'I can't begin to tell you how excited we are about the commercial,' Carson says.

There is also a campaign website, www.discover.co.nz, and another for the trade www.vanuatuspecialists.com, which has training modules and will launch incentives from mid-June. Trade will also be invited to a roadshow in Auckland during July.

Carson acknowledges the destination has



Munish Chetty, Expedia; Michelle Clements, Mangoes; First Travel Group's Mandy Veale

had a bad run: Cyclone Pam in 2015 resulted in a drop of 13.4% of Kiwi visitors and then, early this year, tourism figures took another hit when major airlines suspended flights into Bauerfield International Airport because of its deteriorating runway, which has reopened following temporary repairs. Virgin Australia is resuming its service on May 23, but Air New Zealand will not return until the runway is fixed permanently.

Carson says Virgin's return and the campaign is a sign things are turning around – and it seemed those attending the launch agree.

Munish Chetty, Expedia's associated market manager – Pacific Islands, says the campaign is a good move for Vanuatu given the stiff competition it faces: 'It can only be a good thing.'

Air Vanuatu's recent \$99 one-way special fare, and \$242 return flights announced on Monday, were also credited for Vanuatu's changing fortunes. The airline also helped with a recent trade famail.

Meanwhile, Jonas George, the airline's manager commercial New Zealand, surprised those at the launch with the offer two free return tickets to Vanuatu each.

Rob Macready from Dive Fish Snow Holidays; Gaye Wood representing Iririki Island Resort and Air Vanuatu's Jonas George



Eden's Edge Samoa Hotel

Geary representative for Samoan hotel

Eden's Edge Samoa Hotel has appointed Mike Geary from Eye 4 Travel as its New Zealand representative.

Geary will look after all aspects of the sales and marketing for Eden's Edge Samoa Hotel in the New Zealand market.

Locally owned and operated, the hotel was established in 2007. A five-minute walk to downtown Apia with its markets, shops and restaurants, Eden's Edge provides convenience and comfort at an affordable price. The 13 rooms with private ensuite bathrooms are all air-conditioned and situated in tropical gardens.

Geary says the hotel will be suited to the budget traveller wanting to experience Samoan hospitality and VFR travellers. 'With its central location, the hotel is a good base for the business traveller as well.'

He says rates have been sent out to wholesalers.

mike@eye4travel.co.nz

Raro industry special

Rarotonga's Paradise Holiday Homes has an industry special of \$375 per night for all of the travel industry including family and friends.

Valid for travel to 31 October, the price is per villa per night with a maximum of eight people per villa.

Paradise Holiday Homes offers four villas set on the hills of Titikaveka, each with the same amenities and private swimming pools. The property is also available for exclusive use bookings – great for groups of extended families or friend.

www.paradisehomesrarotonga.com

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Calling all Malaysian foodies

Laksa lovers will delight their taste buds at the annual International Laksa Carnival in Langkawi from 27 to 29 May.

The rice noodle soup dish was introduced into Malaysia by the Chinese several centuries ago and over the years it has become a national food and delicacy. Today, the dish is loved around the world.

More than 60,000 people attend the Laksa Carnival, Tourism Malaysia New Zealand director Zalina Ahmad says: 'It is a great event where you can sample the different versions of the dish from around Malaysia, each with their own distinct texture and flavour.'

Participants can also take home recipes from local and international laksa masters, cooking demonstrations



Laksa is loved around the world

and a laksa-eating competition.

The most common is laksa is a curry made with rice noodles and several other ingredients including cucumber, shrimp, onion, sliced vegetables, sliced boiled eggs, and red chilli. Coconut milk is added to create the soup.

Clients safe following landslide

Exotic Holidays agents have been assured its clients in Sri Lanka are safe after torrential rains triggered a landslide, killing at least 37 people.

The landslide, some 70kms north of Colombo, buried homes in three villages in the central hills of Sri Lanka. Around 150 people were initially reported as missing.

Hundreds of displaced villagers have been given shelter in four temporary camps set up in schools and a Buddhist temple, where they were being given food, blankets and basic medical treatment.

Exotic says its clients have been contacted individually by its operators, and are safe. Agents have been being updated by Exotic this week about the welfare of their clients.

For further updates, call 0508 396 842 or email info@exoticholidays.co.nz

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Dubai encourages visitors into its private homes

Dubai Tourism has announced an agreement with Airbnb in an effort to diversify its accommodation options to travellers.

Dubai Tourism says it is meeting its growing tourism by adapting to travel trends. It says it is hoping to rise to a mid-market demand for family and experiential travel with the agreement.

Airbnb is an increasingly popular way for guests from around the world to experience Dubai. There are almost 3500 Airbnb listings in Dubai. This number and the number of guests choosing Airbnb when travelling to Dubai has doubled since last year.

The memorandum of understanding is aimed at fostering good hosting and follows the introduction of streamlined regulations for homeowners wishing to rent their homes to visitors.

It also means Dubai Tourism and Airbnb will work together to grow and diversify tourism in Dubai, and promote innovative tourism.

Meanwhile, Airbnb has launched an update to its mobile application to deliver guidebooks for guests looking for a local take on a destination.

Diethelm on show in Auckland

Agents who have been wondering where STA Travel's Louise Lithgow is hanging out may have bumped into her in Auckland last Thursday where she was travelling with the Thailand roadshow.

Based in Bangkok as sales director for Diethelm Travel (which also own STA Travel), Lithgow has been helping spearhead changes to the DMC 'to improve what we do to be the very best DMC in Asia,' she says.

'We've gone through dramatic changes in the last nine months. We have a new booking platform with five APIs already in place to key agents. Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, Vietnam, Bhutan and Hong Kong

are live, with Laos, Malaysia and Myanmar scheduled for completion by the end of July.'

One of Diethelm's key clients in New Zealand for Thailand is Exotic Holidays. 'Diethelm Thailand has been a great partner since we started six years back and our business in Thailand is on an increase ever since,' says Exotic's Rahul Sharma.

Diethelm offers off-beat excursions including a Midnight Food Tour exploring Bangkok beyond the tourist zones; Phang Nga Hong by Starlight travelling by canoe; and Sunset Cycling through Bangkok.

Some key packages are the three-day Central Highlights visiting most of the former



Kinjal Shah and Rahul Sharma, both Exotic Holidays, caught up with Louise Lithgow, Diethelm Travel Group at the Thailand roadshow

capitals of Siam including ancient Ayuthaya; Diethelm a three-day canoe expedition in Phang Nga; and hilltribe and mountain treks in the north. www.exoticholidays.co.nz

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**EXOTIC
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Alitalia sashays back into the industry

Alitalia has launched a brand campaign, showcasing itself to the world as a modern airline committed to excellence.

The campaign, the airline's first major promotion in seven years, has been complemented by television commercials as well photographs of the new uniform (designed by Milan based haute couturier Ettore Bilotta) taken by esteemed Italian photographer Pierpaolo Ferrari.

The campaign integrates a series of web video interviews with the airline's industry partners.

Alitalia was restructured in 2014 and upgraded its inflight product and fleet. The new company started operations on January 1, 2015, after historic debt was wiped out and Etihad Airways invested €560 million for a 49% equity stake. The new campaign can be viewed on Alitalia.com

Singapore upgrade

Passengers can upgrade from economy to business class for \$999 per person on Singapore Airlines flights between Christchurch and Singapore (one direction only). The deal is for sales from 18 May to 31 July for travel 1 June to 31 July. Passengers must be flying beyond Singapore.

www.krisport.co.nz

Christmas shopping in Hong Kong

Full service carrier, Hong Kong Airlines (HX) has released its AKL to HKG low season fares. Valid for travel 11 – 30 November 2016 and 05 February – 30 November 2017, return economy class fares start from \$1224pp or travel in business class for \$2204pp. Refer to GDS or World Aviation.

Hong Kong Airlines' direct services AKL – HKG commence on 11 November 2016 utilising an Airbus A330-200 aircraft, in a two class configuration – 24 in business (2-2-2 with 155 degree seat recline) and 259 in economy (2-4-2).



Hong Kong Airlines business class

OE travel for less

Cathay Pacific is offering UK-bound Kiwis a special one-way fare from Auckland to London from \$939.

This special is on sale until 30 June, 2016, and is available for travel between now and 30 September, 2016.

Those looking to explore the British Isles on a more defined timetable can take advantage of the airline's special return fares from Auckland to Manchester from \$2159. This route is also sale until 30 June. It is available



for travel between 15 October and 30 November. All fares include taxes and fly via Hong Kong.

www.cathaypacific.co.nz

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Airlines

Meet Leo: the baggage handler of the future

Passengers arriving at Geneva Airport this week have received help from a baggage robot called Leo.

The robot was developed by air transport IT provider SITA, and is being trialed outside the airport's terminal one. Leo, a fully autonomous, self-propelling baggage robot, provides a glimpse into the future of baggage handling being explored by SITA Lab.

Leo – named after Leonardo da Vinci – helps passengers as they approach the terminal building. Touching Leo's Scan&Fly bag drop interface opens baggage compartment doors to allow travellers to place their bags inside.

After the passengers have scanned their boarding passes, the tags are printed

and can be attached to the luggage. With the bags loaded and tagged, the compartment door closes and Leo displays the boarding gate and departure time.

The robot then takes the bags to the baggage handling area where they are sorted and connected to the correct flight.

Robots such as Leo will mean fewer trolleys and bags will be seen in airport terminals.

www.sita.aero/baggagerobot



Leo takes care of business in Geneva

Jet Airways upgrades for comfort

India's Jet Airways will upgrade its daily flights between Singapore and Mumbai by deploying its Airbus A330-200 aircraft from 1 June.

The upgrade will increase the seat capacity by 50%, compared with the Boeing 737 currently operating the route.

The A330-200 offers guests two-cabin seating configuration of 18 seats in premiere and 236 in economy. The upgrade to a wide-body operation between Singapore and Mumbai follows the recent deployment of an A330 on the Singapore – Delhi route.

The aircraft upgrade will give greater comfort to guests travelling from

the cities in Australia to Mumbai, over Singapore. Additionally, guests on inbound flights from Melbourne / Sydney / Brisbane / Perth over Singapore will be able to lock into onward connections to key destinations across Jet Airways' domestic network and beyond to international cities from Mumbai.

Colin Neubronner, Jet Airways' senior VP, marketing and sales, says the upgrade meets growing demand for premium seats. 'This sector has seen a growth in traffic by over 34% in last two years, particularly among business travellers.'

Cathay Pacific – 'slight decrease'

The Cathay Pacific and Dragonair combined traffic figures for April 2016 that show a marginal year-on-year decrease in the number of passengers carried, together with a small increase in the volume of cargo and mail uplifted.

Cathay Pacific and Dragonair carried a total of 2,909,534 passengers last month – a decrease of 0.1% compared to April 2015.

The passenger load factor fell by 2.3 percentage points to 84.9%, while capacity, measured in available seat kilometres (ASKs), grew by 2.4%. In the first four months of 2016, the number of passengers carried rose by 3.8% compared to a 5.5% increase in capacity.

Discounted South American fares on offer

South America's LATAM Airlines is offering special fares to the continent's key hotspots.

Return economy airfares will start from \$1199 (including taxes) to Santiago, Chile.

Kiwis can also book flights from Auckland to Argentina's capital of Buenos Aires, via Santiago, from \$1199; flights through to Brazil's Rio de Janeiro from \$1499 or to Lima, the gateway of Peru from \$1499. The discounted flights are on sale until 7 June.

LATAM Airlines offers daily flights from Auckland to Santiago, Chile on board its fleet of 787-9 aircraft. It has onward connections to more than 137 destinations, including favourites such as Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador and Bolivia.

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New Zealand

Ski season opens with South Island deals

Ski hotel Crowne Plaza Queenstown has teamed up with Cardrona Alpine Resort and NZSki's The Remarkables and Coronet Peak ski fields to offer guests two ski packages this winter.

A Cardrona ski package is available for skiers and snowboarders staying at the centrally located lakeside hotel for a minimum of three nights between Cardrona's opening day on 11 June and 9 October.

The deal is available for all room types and includes a buffet breakfast at threesixty restaurant, a day lift pass for two at Cardrona Alpine Resort and door-to-door return transport.

The Ski into September deal offers savings of \$630 per person between 1 September and 2 October, 2016. The NZSki package combines seven nights' accommodation at Crowne Plaza with daily breakfast, and a five-day lift pass for The Remarkables and Coronet Peak ski fields.

Crowne Plaza Queenstown general manager Reinier Eulink says the packages



Carve up the slopes at Cardrona Alpine Resort this winter

ensure visitors can ski, play and stay in Queenstown this winter.

The deadline for booking the Ski into September package is 15 August, 2016.

Meanwhile, winter has started at Canterbury's Mt Hutt ski area after a fall of natural and manmade snow. 'We had up to 3cm of natural snowfall then it was all guns blazing, including our new snowguns hot out of the container that arrived from Italy on Friday,' says ski area manager James McKenzie.

Mt Hutt is scheduled to open on 10 June.

Skiers and snowboarders are encouraged to pick up their season passes early from Cheapskates in Christchurch. 'If you've already got your pass you can head up to Mt Hutt and straight onto the slopes when we're open for business.'

Year round for Pipers

Pipers Lodge near Mt Ruapehu is attracting all-year business with the growing popularity of the Tongaririo Crossing.

Just minutes away, the 19.4km crossing has been named one of the top ten walks in the world.

Located in the heart of National Park, the lodge suits FIT as well as groups (corporate, education and sporting) looking for team building activities, meetings and special events such as reunions.

For the upcoming ski season, the lodge has new equipment for hire including Atomic skis and boots. It will also offer a new winter menu from early July.

Pipers offers door to door mountain transport and has a bar and restaurant, ski and snow board hire, large projector screen and television, open wood fire, three spa pools, drying room, table tennis, pinball and pool table.

www.piperslodge.co.nz



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Kaleidoscope images... and all that jazz in Christchurch

A kaleidoscope of sound is lighting up Christchurch's central city next week to launch the Cavell Leitch New Zealand International Jazz and Blues Festival, which runs from 25 to 29 May.

Giant moving kaleidoscopic images, composed of musical instruments, will be projected on to the Isaac Theatre Royal's facade for two nights from 5.30 to 7.30pm, on Wednesday, 25 May, and Thursday, 26 May.

Festival director Jodi Wright says the creative

team from Christchurch agency Studio Publica took on the challenge of turning the vibrant and complex sound of jazz music into a kaleidoscope pattern made of musical instrument images.

The Isaac Theatre Royal features in the Festival programme for the first time ever, hosting two of the week's top shows including the opening night 25th Anniversary Gala Jazz Concert. The 25 May concert brings together a prestigious

line up of Ara Institute Canterbury Music Arts graduates, staff and current students. Multi-Grammy award winner, and American jazz great Ramsey Lewis and his quartet will headline the festival on 26 May at Isaac Theatre Royal, their first and only New Zealand appearance.

'With 26 shows programmed over five days this is a chance to hear the very best Kiwi jazz and blues alongside international stars,' says Wright.



Americas

Lake discovery at Galapagos

Fascination surrounding the Galapagos Islands is about to step up a gear following the discovery of a crystallised lava lake on Isabela Island.

The lake, with a dimension of about 30 metres, features waves of petrified lava.

'This is a unique discovery,' says scientist Theofilos Toulkeridis from the Escuela Politecnica Superior del Ejercito (ESPE) based in Quito.

Meanwhile, 30 lava trees have been found just before the chimney of volcano Chico on Isabela Island.

Toulkeridis says major discoveries happen only one in about 20 years. The last find in this region was a cactus at Genovesa Island in the Cerro Azul (Blue Hill), where tourists are forbidden.

Latin American specialist Rachel Williams from Viva Expeditions says visits to the lake may also encourage cruises to go on to Genovesa Island.

'The discovery may also encourage many return visitors to the Galapagos,' Williams says.

'The Galapagos has incredible wildlife, and amazing lava tunnels so this just adds another wonder to the long list already on offer.'

BA heads to Chile

British Airways has announced it is to launch a direct service between London and Santiago, Chile.

The route will be the airline's lengthiest with a flight time of 14 hours 40 minutes.

BA will use one a Boeing 787 Dreamliners on the route, which will run four times a week from 3 January, 2017.

The airline recently launched services to San Jose in Costa Rica and Lima, Peru. In addition, it also operates flight to Rio and Sao Paulo in Brazil and Buenos Aires in Argentina.

NYC jumps on the fitness buzz

New York City's five boroughs are steering time-pressed travelling fitness buffs away from the gym by promoting workouts in the city's great outdoors.

It says outdoor fitness regimens are ideal for time-pressed travellers looking to get in a good workout while simultaneously exploring some of New York City's parks and green spaces.

'Fitness is an integral part of the New York City lifestyle,' says Fred Dixon, president and chief executive officer of NYC & Company.

'From running and cycling to boxing and kayaking, the city's outdoor fitness offerings are far-reaching and provide exciting ways for people of all experience levels to exercise and stay active this summer.'

Peru – don't mind if I do

Clients can save \$500 per person twin share and \$700 per person for solo travellers for all bookings made by 30 June, 2016, on Abercrombie & Kent's nine-day Glimpse of Peru journey or its 19-day Best of Ecuador and Peru trip.

A&K's Glimpse of Peru journey is a luxury private itinerary, which includes two nights in Lima, two nights in Peru's Sacred Valley, one night in Machu Picchu and three nights in Cusco. Private sightseeing highlights include the major attractions of Lima, a market visit and cooking experience, a personalised experience in an Andean highland

community, exploration of Machu Picchu and the colonial highlights of Cusco.

The twin share per person cost is \$8095 (was \$8595), while solo travellers pay \$13,850 (was \$14,550).

The Best of Peru and Ecuador journey combines a seven-night luxury itinerary in Peru along with a seven-night Galapagos cruise and time in Quito and Guayaquil.

This trip costs \$20,985 (was \$21,485) twin share per person. Solo travellers pay \$28,640 (was \$29,340).

The offer is valid for travel from May to December 2016 (blackout dates apply).

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AIR CANADA

SALES AND MARKETING APPOINTMENTS

The Hotel Grand Chancellor in Wellington has appointed three new sales and marketing staff.



Jessica Taylor



Kelsey Mackaness



Louisa Tocker

They are: Jessica Taylor, marketing and communications executive at the James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor; Kelsey Mackaness, sales and marketing co-ordinator, James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor and Louisa Tocker, marketing and loyalty co-ordinator (Australia and New Zealand) at Hotel Grand Chancellor's head office.

Taylor was previously employed as sales and marketing co-ordinator at head office for two years, while Mackaness joins the company after completing a Bachelor of Visual Communication Design (Honours). Tocker has taken on the role after completing a media studies degree.



Dennis Payne from House of Travel; New Zealand country director for Discover the World (Air Tahiti Nui's GSA) Chris Jones and Air Tahiti Nui's business development manager Faye Spooner flanked by Westpac helicopter pilots

Helicopter trust recognises industry sponsors

Air Tahiti Nui business development manager Faye Spooner took to the skies over Auckland last week – but it wasn't in the trademark lagoon blues of her company's planes.

Instead Spooner enjoyed a helicopter ride over the city as a thank you from the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Trust Fund.

Air Tahiti Nui, along with House of Travel, are sponsors of the annual Hibiscus Rodders Beach Festival in

Orewa. The airline has helped to raise tens of thousands of dollars for the trust during the last two years.

Held each January, the festival attracts hundreds of motoring enthusiasts with all manner of cars from classics through to hot rods.

A big fundraiser this year was the major auction prize of two tickets to Los Angeles flying with Air Tahiti Nui, five nights accommodation and a rental car.

Linda finds her niche in Queenstown



Linda Lohmeijer

South Island tourism operator Southern Discoveries' newest employee loves her 'dream job' working as a conference and incentive sales manager based in Queenstown.

Linda Lohmeijer, 25, has always wanted to come to New Zealand from her home country, the Netherlands. 'While working in the hotel industry in the Netherlands, I met some really lovely Kiwis and heard so much about the country, so I really wanted to come to New Zealand,' she says.

Lohmeijer has worked in the meetings, conference and events sector of five-star hotels in the Netherlands and at Hilton Queenstown Resort and Spa.

Hotel gets behind Fiji

The James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor has got behind this Saturday's I Love Fiji Cyclone Relief Concert at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington by donating 23 room nights, plus breakfast, for the performing artists.

All proceeds from the event, organised by Fijian Community Association and Churches Unite, will go to rebuilding schools destroyed by the Cyclone Winston in February.

Pacific artists will be performing on the night.

General manager, Steve Martin acknowledges the close cultural ties and connection the hotel and New Zealand has with Fiji.

'We have a number of staff as well as guests who are of Fijian heritage. The destruction Cyclone Winston left in its path is overwhelming, particularly for the children whose education facilities were wiped out. We are fortunate to be in a position to contribute to the relief concert and hope the Wellington community supports the event.'

Tickets for the I Love Fiji Cyclone Relief Concert are still available via Ticketek. They cost \$30. The hotel also encourages visitors to attend the Pasifika Food Festival running from 9 to 19 June at Whitby's Restaurant and Bar.



YOURTravel says hello to a new world

YOURTravel says joining the helloworld network has doubled its business, boosting staffing levels.

Managing director Lee Amor says trade has shot up by 50%, and the company's guided tour of Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia in June is exceeding expectations.

'We have 34 signed up. We usually have 16 to 18 in our groups, but since we joined the helloworld network, we have seen a huge increase in numbers coming into the Paraparaumu Beach shop,' Amor says.

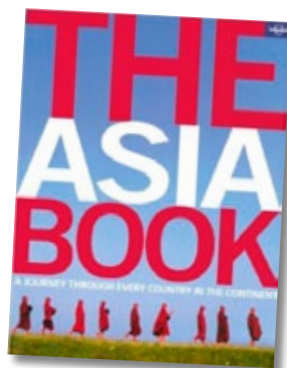
An additional two trainee tour leaders will accompany the group. An extra travel consultant has also been employed to help with the increased trade.

YOURTravel branded tours take in Thailand, Vietnam Cambodia, India and Borneo. 'We have been around since 2007 and know the products intimately.'

With the recent addition of the GO Holidays products, Amor is upbeat about the future and its brand expansion.

Asia winners

Congratulations to our Lonely Planet winners - Charlene Forbes from Travelsmart New Plymouth who says Malaysia is her favourite destination in Asia and to Active Asia's Caroline Wakelin who is dead keen on Vietnam. A copy of Lonely Planet's, Journey through Asia is on its way to each of you - well done. It's not too late to enter TRAVELinc's competition to win a pair of awesome Maui Jim sunglasses or a bottle of our finest wine in our Name the Mystery Person competition. [CLICK HERE](#) to scroll through the latest magazine and enter the competitions.



Win a taste of New Caledonia

Champagne, gift cards and a New Caledonian faml are up for grabs for agents booking clients to New Caledonia. Agents have until 31 May to book with Aircalin or Air New Zealand to be in to win a Champagne and chocolate hamper. There are also 10 seats available for the faml.

Log bookings at www.newcale.co.nz. The more bookings, the more chances there are to win a prize.

All bound for South America

To celebrate its new brand identity, LATAM Airlines is hosting a group of nine agents on a tour of South America that takes in Peru, Brazil and Chile.

Patricio Aylwin, managing director Asia Pacific, LATAM Airlines and Francisco Portilla, commercial director South Pacific, LATAM Airlines and agents from Consolidated Travel, Expedia, APT, STA Travel, Flight Centre Australia and New Zealand; Adventure World and Bunnik Tours enjoyed premium business class on board the airline's Boeing 787-9.

The group will start at Peru's



South American or bust (back from left) Melvyn Almeida, Consolidated Travel; Demi Kavaratzis, Expedia; Alexandra Pisker, APT; Jerome King, STA Travel; Roann Roberts, Flight Centre NZ and Dennis Bunnik, Bunnik Tours. (Front, from left): Leanne Woolstencroft, Flight Centre; Carolina Oriani, Adventure World; Francisco Portilla, LATAM Airlines and Kirk Wong, Expedia

capital Lima, before heading on to Machu Picchu and the Amazon rainforest.

They will then visit Iguazu Falls and wind up the trip with a visit to Rio de Janeiro.

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