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QLD: More Money, Strategic Focus

The new Tourism Events Queensland (formerly TQ) has allocated more budget and promised a greater strategic focus for the New Zealand market in 2013, as a part of the STO's target to double Kiwi tourism spend in the state by 2020.

"It's a new era, a new start and a new business coming together and New Zealand plays a critical role in the overall mix," says the STO executive director marketing, Steve McRoberts. "We've received a new, increased, budget and it's allowed us to put more effort and more dollars into New Zealand; together with increased collaboration and partnerships with our regional tourism offices." McRoberts says we can expect to see far more strategic Queensland

brand campaigns in the Kiwi market moving forward, as the STO looks to achieve its target to double the current AUD513 million annual Kiwi tourism spend in the state by 2020. "It's just so we don't look like the *Police Academy*, falling over ourselves, doing the same thing at the same time—we are going to be very strategic and go very strong on true destination marketing."

Building Kiwi awareness of Queensland's regional tourism offering is another key part of the STO's new direction. "There will be more brand campaigns around the regional destinations, such as the Southern Great Barrier Reef," says McRoberts. "It's more than just Bundaberg, it's Heron Island, and the whole region—and within that we've seen the turtles [experience] at Mon Repos going gangbusters. Turtle visitation is up 20% and it's a great example of a new story we are going to tell the New Zealand public."

McRoberts acknowledges the critical role the New Zealand retail travel distribution will play in growing Kiwi travel to the state. And on the agent front the TEQ executive says famils will also play an important part in building the state's profile. "We have to make sure that agents are excited about the experiences and product Queensland has to offer to give them the confidence to sell to their clients."

*See pg 3 for more on TEQ's Kiwi plans

TQ Corporate Rejig

Combining the strength of Events Queensland and Tourism Queensland, the state government last Fri passed legislation to form the combined entity Tourism Events Queensland. A new chief executive for the STO is yet to be appointed, but Queensland tourism heavyweight Steven Gregg will chair the new board. "It's a very exciting board to lead us through this new era," says the STO's visiting executive director marketing, Steve McRoberts.

AUD1.3m for Kiwis

Tourism Events Queensland has allocated AUD1.3 million to the Kiwi market for the current financial year—up around AUD450,000 on last year's budget. The funds will be spent across major marketing campaigns, trade and media famils and activity with its industry partners including wholesalers and retail chains.

SQ On VS Sale

Singapore Airlines has confirmed it is in discussions with 'interested parties' on a possible sale of its 49% stake in Virgin Atlantic.

The carrier says the talks 'may or may not result in a transaction'. It is believed SQ is in talks with Delta Air Lines—which is said to have been seeking a stake in VS for access to the carrier's sought-after London Heathrow slots.

Meanwhile, both SQ and rival Etihad Airways are reportedly ramping up efforts to increase their respective stakes in Virgin Australia to gain influence in the Australian market. SQ currently holds 10% of DJ, while EY bought up 3.96% of the carrier in Jun. Air New Zealand's stake remains at 19.99%.

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Passport Gender Change

As of 30 Nov, transgender Kiwis can change their gender in their passport without having to apply to the Family Court, or can instead opt to use an X instead of M or F, confirms Internal Affairs. Clients must fill in a new adult passport application form, and provide a statutory declaration advising of their gender preference, which at this stage can only be completed in hard copy.

STAR ALLIANCE
THE WAY THE EARTH CONNECTS



See page 5

Plantation Is. Death

Plantation Island Resort in Fiji has confirmed the death of a 17-year-old Australian at the resort, but says unsubstantiated reports of drinking games around the pool in the lead up to the accident are untrue.

The teen was part of an escorted tour group of Aussie school-leavers, or schoolies, says resort management. "This was a terrible accident that happened very quickly, and despite the best efforts of resort medical staff and [tour company] crew, we were unable to save him."

Australian media reports claim the boy may have died during a breath-holding dare in the pool at 0400.

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All Blacks Tours Releases Packages

All Blacks Tours has released details of its new supporter packages for the 2013 season, and says it is happy to discuss how it can work with travel agents to sell the tours.

All Blacks Tours has been appointed by the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) as the exclusive provider of official All Blacks supporters travel. Its tour packages can now be booked on-line, and Air New Zealand and its Air New Zealand Holiday stores have been appointed as non-exclusive sales agents.

A spokesperson for the company says it is also 'happy to discuss options with interested agents'. Commission rates will depend on the availability of packages and the number of packages requested, she adds.

... Package Details

Packages will range from the 'ultimate' fan experience to accommodation and match ticket-only, and will

NZ Aussie Fares

Air New Zealand has re-introduced PBAGN63 and SWRKN63 tactical WLG-BNE and PBAGN79 and SWRKN79 CHC-BNE fares for sales to 06 Jan. All other fare conditions remain the same. See airnzagent.co.nz

New Wotif CEO Blume

Wotif has announced that Scott Blume will take over the chief executive role from current ceo Robbie Cooke. A former president of Travelocity and ceo of Zuji, Blume has also been a non-executive director on the Singapore Tourism Board, and md of Carlson Wagonlit. Wotif chairman Dick McIlwain says Blume's appointment follows an 'extensive search'.

AS Expands ANC-LAX

Alaska Airlines is expanding its Anchorage-Los Angeles service from 08 Apr, says World Aviation. The expanded service will include a daily daytime flight more of the year, and an extra night flight over summer.

be available for both domestic and international tests, with prices starting from \$355pp.

"Through our relationship with the NZRU, [clients will] have the opportunity to get a behind the scenes perspective, attend training runs, hear from the biggest names in rugby and immerse [themselves] in All Blacks fever while on tour with the team," says All Blacks Tours gm David Caldwell.

The first packages to go on sale are for the opening test of 2013 against France at Eden Park on 08 Jun, and the preliminary Bledisloe Cup fixture on 17 Aug in Sydney. Packages for other 2013 fixtures will launch early next year. See allblackstours.com

New Cooks NTO Head

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation reportedly has a new chief executive, three months after the departure of ceo Carmel Beattie. Acting head Halatoa Fua will take over the role permanently after proving himself as a leader, the *Cook Islands News* reported NTO chairman Ewan Smith as saying. The Cook Islands tourism forum is on this week with over 60 wholesalers and travel agents, including from New Zealand, in attendance.

NZ Retimed Domestic

Air New Zealand has retimed some AKL-WLG and AKL-CHC flights for travel 02 Jun-25 Sep to provide better connections from NZ's DPS-AKL flights. NZ475 AKL-WLG has also been renumbered to NZ469 on Wed, with AKL departures for NZ469/559 on Wed and Sun at 2135 02-16 Jun and then 2100 and 2055 19 Jun-25 Sep.

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VS Mobile Boarding

Virgin Atlantic customers can now have a paperless journey through the airport, instead using their iPhone or iPod, with the carrier claiming to be the first UK-based carrier to integrate Passbook into its mobile boarding cards. Passengers will be able to send their boarding card directly to Passbook at on-line check-in, which means they can head straight to security (via bag-drop if they have luggage). The technology can be used at key UK airports and selected other airports around the world.



Twelve Days Of Christmas: DAY ONE

Question: What is Acrossia's phone number?

Correct answer: 0-9-309 1188

Winner: Sofia Stewart, House of Travel Wanganui.

Prize: Christmas Goodies to the value of \$50.

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Queensland Grows Kiwi Arrivals

New Zealand remains Queensland's number one inbound market—welcoming 413,000 Kiwi visitors in the last financial year, up 1% on the previous year.

“Despite the strength of the AUD against the NZD we're glad to see the New Zealand market is still progressing,” says Tourism Events

Hollywood Makeover

LA's famous Hollywood sign has undergone its biggest makeover in 35 years, just in time for its 90th birthday next year. The refreshed sign was presented to the public on Tue following a two-month restoration which saw the 15m letters stripped, washed and coated with around 360 gallons of white paint.

Great Keppel Hostel

Hostelzoo is opening what it says is the only backpacker-style accommodation on Great Keppel Island to 'return the ex-backpacker haunt to its former glory'. Hostelzoo Island Eco Backpackers is totally self-sufficient and will only accommodate 12 travellers at a time in two six-bed dorms. Activities include wandering 17 beaches, swimming, snorkelling and bushwalking. See gkibackpackers.com

GO Pacific Islands

GO Holidays has Pacific Island packages including five-nights and flights with Virgin Australia from \$879pp s/t ex Auckland and staying at the Puaikura Reef Lodges. Rarotonga-bound clients can upgrade to the Edgewater Resort & Spa from \$979pp s/t. Tonga packages start from \$629pp s/t for five nights, and Samoa is from \$799pp s/t for five nights. Bonus offers include free nights. GO has details

Queensland executive director marketing Steve McRoberts.

While he concedes that the strong Aussie dollar presents a challenge for the destination, McRoberts also points out that Queensland's proximity remains a key selling point for Kiwis. “Time is a currency, there's always going to be competition from other destinations, but we are known to New Zealanders and we are a stone's throw away—we'll be looking to capitalise on that.”

Stay Pay Koh Samui

Cox & Kings is offering eight nights for the price of seven at the Bandara Resort and Spa in Koh Samui, Thailand from \$635pp s/t. The deal is valid for departures 01 Apr-17 Jul and 01 Sep-15 Dec, and includes seven breakfasts and return airport transfers.

AKL Pre-flight Hotel Deal

Holiday Inn Auckland Airport has a Park Stay and Go package including overnight accommodation, 14 nights car parking, airport transfers for two adults, and kids stay and eat free. The deal is available from \$147, see holidayinn.com/parkstayandgo

QF Lounge At OOL

Qantas has opened a new Qantas Club lounge at Gold Coast Domestic Airport, Coolangatta. The project was fast-tracked so the lounge would open in time for the festive season, and it offers 530m² for 125 guests to use, with full buffet including a barista service, business facilities, meeting room, shower facilities and a dedicated family area. The lounge is situated at the northern end of Gold Coast Domestic Airport. QF Domestic chief executive Lyell Strambi says the carrier's return to the Sydney-Gold Coast route has exceeded expectations, with 'strong bookings' for premium passengers and 'significant interest from international passengers'.

Mozzies Over Masterton

The only de Havilland Mosquito Fighter Bomber still flying will make an appearance at Jan's Wings Over Wairarapa airshow in Masterton over Wellington Anniversary Weekend 18-20 Jan.

The aircraft was rebuilt over seven years at Ardmore in Auckland, and was the fastest operational aircraft in World War II. The mosquito will feature alongside 70 other aircraft during the three-day event. Tickets are available from Ticketek.



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Ireland Upbeat About '13

The strong Kiwi dollar is reportedly contributing to a positive outlook for Tourism Ireland next year.

The NTO's chief executive told the *Irish Examiner* that 2012 was a record year for emerging markets and 'a lot of those economies are unaffected by the global economic crisis, particularly in places like Australia and New Zealand'. New flights from Emirates means Ireland is now just one stop from New Zealand, he added.

The country is expecting 7.6 million visitors next year, with The Gathering playing a key part in attracting tourists.

Langham Xmas Tea

The Langham Auckland is gearing up for its most decadent Christmas Afternoon Tea yet on 09 Dec. Santa will pay a visit, while guests are served turkey breast and cranberry sandwiches, macaroons, Christmas stollen and more. The event costs \$75 for adults and \$55 for kids 12 and under.



South Africa Luxury With World Journeys

World Journeys has a new Kalahari Desert and Cape Town package including a stay at the luxury The Motse. Priced from \$6468pp s/t, the seven-night package includes a week at the resort, light aircraft transfers, all safaris in the Tswalu Game Reserve and most meals. The itinerary runs Johannesburg to Cape Town or vice versa. Details ph: 0800 117 311.

Is IATA's proposed new distribution capability a threat to agents?

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Best In Australia Travel Named

Sydney is Australia's favourite city, Margaret River the top town, Queensland the most popular state and Qantas the best major airline according to the *Australian Traveller Reader's Choice Awards, announced last night.*

Sydney was one of five category winners from NSW, with a weekend in the city named the best Aussie travel experience; Quay the country's best restaurant; Opera Bar the best bar; and BridgeClimb the best guided tour.

VIC Spa Upgrade

The refurbishment of the Grand Mercure Forest Resort's apartments has been completed, advises Accor Vacation Club. Located in the 'heart of Victorian spa country' around 90 minutes' drive from Melbourne, the property's two-bedroom apartments have been redesigned in-line with the brand's Resort Spa Series. Celebration rates are available from AUD216 per night for a min. three-night stay.

QLD scooped the most awards per state though, including favourite winter destination; Whitsundays for most romantic destination; Gold Coast for summer favourite; qualia as best resort; Bareboating in the Whitsundays as best cruise/yachting; Glass on Glasshouse was the best B&B; and BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort as the best campsite.

WA's the Kimberley was named dream destination and best for adventure holidays; Crown Hotels Melbourne the best luxury hotel; and the Daly Waters Pub in the NT is the top pub in Australia.

Other awards included the Ghan for best train journey and Ibis, favourite affordable hotel brand.

Bentours Antarctic Deal

Bentours is taking 25% off 16 Feb departures of its 11-day Antarctica Classic, in three-five cabin categories, now from \$8736pp t/s. Clients will travel on MS Expedition through the Drake Passage, and hear lectures about heroic tales from the area. The package includes one-night pre-cruise in Ushuaia.

Coast National Parks

Australia's Pacific Coast has launched the fifth special interest trail, incorporating 22 National Parks that are dotted along the coast from Sydney to Brisbane. The trail highlights different activities and locations that clients travelling on the coast can experience, from cultural and heritage sites to rivers, and climbing—and there's detailed maps to help clients get around. Details of the initiative are available on the Legendary Pacific Coast website, and on a free iPhone app. See pacificcoast.com.au

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- Thorough knowledge of MS Office, including PowerPoint
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- Applicants must have a current driver's license and own car.

Applications should be forwarded by 14 Dec, by email to: stephen.tanner@walshegroup.com

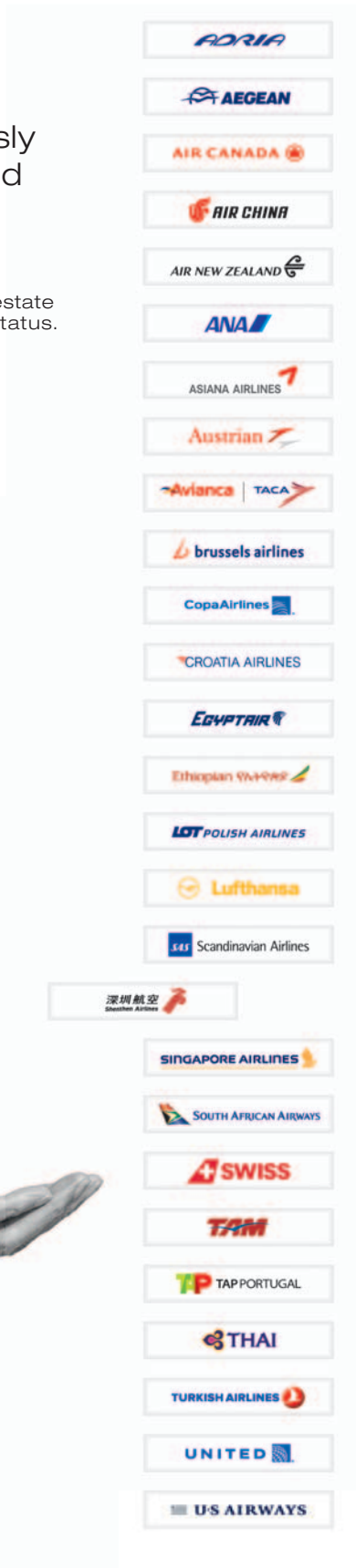
Japan Floats Train Idea

Forward-thinking Japan is looking to 2027, when a 500km/h 'levitating' bullet train will carry passengers from Tokyo to Nagoya in just 40 minutes. A prototype for the train has been unveiled this week, but it won't launch for another 15 years if the concept is taken onboard by Japan authorities, say reports. It uses an electromagnetic cushion for both levitation and propulsion, says maker JR Tokai, and also features a streamlined nose similar to bullet trains already in service. By 2045, the train could extend services to Osaka.

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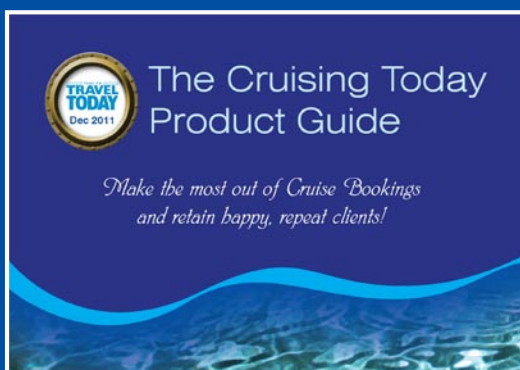
Destinational Features are generally published one page a day over several days, and are available as a stand-alone electronic mini-brochure with a cover that can be personalised and branded so that brokers and agents can send selected features direct to clients.

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Australia on Screen-1-Jun12	20-Jun-12	MKOP2-Judy Bailey in Tasmania	22-Jul-11
Australia on Screen-2-Jun12	27-Jun-12	MKOP3-SthAus-Jul11	29-Jul-11
Australia On Screen-3-Jul12	4-Jul-12	MKOP4-Robyn Malcolm Tropical Nth Queensland	10-Aug-11
Australia on Screen-4-Jul12	10-Jul-12	MKOP5-Mikey Havoc Northern Territory	17-Aug-11
Australia On Screen-5-Jul12	18-Jul-12	MKOP6-Clarke Gayford in the Whitsundays	24-Aug-11
Australia On Screen-Final Episode-Jul12	23-Jul-12	MKOP7-Antonia Prebble in WA	31-Aug-11
Australia Uncovered-1-Eyre Peninsula	28-Oct-11	MKOP8-Josh Emmett-Victoria nth east	6-Sep-11
Australia Uncovered-2-Sthwest	28-Nov-11	MKOP9-Lisa Chappell-Barossa	12-Sep-11
Australia Uncovered-3-Tasmania	20-Jan-12	MKOP-Wrapup	27-Sep-11
Australia Uncovered-4-Mornington Peninsula	5-Mar-12	Oman Feature Travel Today 2010	25-Nov-10
Australia Uncovered-5-Sthn Great Barrier Reef	5-Apr-12	Only in Australia-1	5-Oct-12
Australia Uncovered-6-Byron Bay	30-Apr-12	Oosterdam Today	15-Nov-12
Australia-OnlyInAustralia-2-Nature-Nov12.pdf	15-Nov-12	Pacific Pearl Feature	21-Dec-10
AustraliaUncovered-7-Kakadu	1-Jun-12	Samoa Today Sep12	12-Sep-12
Britain You're Invited 2012	28-Jul-11	Singapore Feature-Aug11	11-Aug-11
Carnival Spirit Today	13-Nov-12	Tahiti Today Apr12	3-May-12
Carsland Feature Jun12	20-Jun-12	Tasmania Feature-Jun11	27-Jun-11
Cunard Queen Elizabeth TT Feature	6-Mar-12	The Cruising Today Product Guide	29-Nov-11
Destination NSW-Sydney Insider-Beach Culture	17-Nov-11	Tourism Australia mini feature 10	11-Jul-11
Destination NSW-Sydney Insider-Sydney Precincts	3-Apr-12	Tourism Australia mini feature 1-Food and Wine	25-Nov-10
Dubai Oman Feature-Nov11	15-Nov-11	Tourism Australia mini feature 2-National Landscapes	25-Nov-10
Dubai Today May12	23-May-12	Tourism Australia mini feature 3-Nothing like Australia	25-Nov-10
Escape Mexico feature	7-Oct-11	Tourism Australia mini feature 4-Journeys	25-Nov-10
Fiji's Coral Coast	29-Aug-11	Tourism Australia Mini feature 5-Coastal	6-Dec-10
GO TT Australia feature	3-Jun-11	Tourism Australia mini feature 6	9-Feb-11
GO TT Bali feature	14-Mar-12	Tourism Australia mini feature 7	14-Mar-11
GO TT China Feature-Apr11	20-Apr-11	Tourism Australia mini feature 8	4-May-11
GO TT Fiji Family Fun	26-Sep-11	Tourism Australia Mini Feature9-TT-Jun11	7-Jun-11
GO TT Hawaii Feature-Apr11	4-May-11	Travel Today Broker Report	15-Oct-12
GO TT Western Australia feature-Aug11	11-Aug-11	Visit Britain - Royal feature	3-May-11
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