

**VIEW FROM THE TOP**

Laurent Kuenzle fills the big shoes of Luzi Matzig as the new CEO of Asian Trails Group. But apart from the new title, nothing has changed at the DMC.



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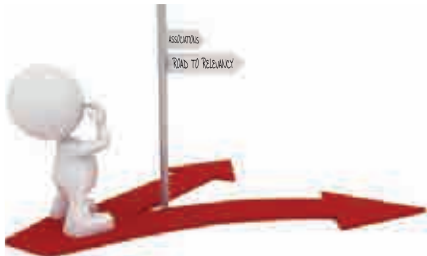
# BEING A GOOD SPORT

How can Asian destinations play a better game at attracting major sporting events?



## CEBU MAKES A COMEBACK

Recovery is on the way, as the city widens its appeal beyond beaches



## WHICH WAY TO GO?

Trade associations, including those in travel and tourism, battle for relevancy



## IT FEELS LIKE HOME

Serviced residences are switching on the chic factor to attract a younger crowd



## A COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP

Some OTAs are jealous lovers, seeking to control whom hotels work with

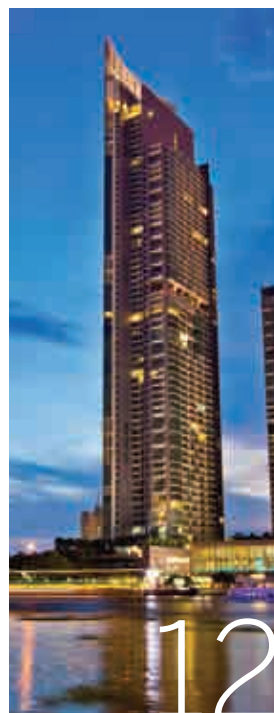


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Report: Sporting events



Guide: Serviced residences



Destination: South Korea



Destination: Philippines



Travel and tourism players are constantly striving to offer their customers the most comfortable product in the most convenient way. But at what cost was this achieved?

## PLANET IS PRODUCT

**Most business leaders would have heard the saying 'what gets measured gets managed'.**

Travel and tourism players are constantly striving to offer their customers the most comfortable product in the most convenient way. But what's the backstory? At what cost was this achieved?

At the recent WTTC Global Summit in China, it was suggested by more than one speaker that the industry should publicly make known how a company's delivery of goods/services impacted people and the environment throughout its supply chain, creating a sustainability report card of sorts.

Shockingly, only 10-20 per cent of tourist spending stays within the country of destination (*TTG Asia e-Daily*, April 25, 2014). So the question is – how can we raise this figure?

It is no secret that today's Millennials – tomorrow's consumers – are more socially conscious than their parents. I disagree that this new generation is not willing to put their money where their mouth is. Just as they are discerning enough to sieve out quality products, they are also able to sniff out businesses that are only embracing CSR as a PR strategy.

A friend of mine recently told me she will be spending her next holiday climbing Mount Rinjani in Lombok with nine other ladies. A firm believer in women and children's rights, she is doing this in conjunction with Peaks Foundation, which organises mountain-based adventures that raise funds for female-focused initiatives.

Yet another pal is pledging a significant part of cash gifts from her upcoming wedding to help rebuild the lives and homes of typhoon Haiyan victims even as she builds

her own future.

I am personally inspired by Bruce Poon Tip, founder of G Adventures Canada, whom I had the privilege of meeting at a PATA conference sometime ago. Calling his company a social enterprise, its mantra is 'Don't just see the world. Make it better.' G Adventures' non-profit Planeterra Foundation works directly with the tour operating arm to minimise impact on destinations, and promote sustainable solutions and long-term income for locals. I am looking forward to checking out the community-run restaurant it set up in Peru, which all groups visit as part of their Sacred Valley tour.

I applaud all companies for creating employment opportunities in developing economies, as this is surely one way to make a positive contribution. However, they must also be mindful not to create new problems while trying to solve others. Cambodia's "orphans", for example, have been plucked away from their parents to feed the desires of well-meaning voluntourists who do not know better.

Travel and tourism has the power to be a force for good. Its influence is so far-reaching, it can even change consumer behaviour, whether it's eliminating demand for shark's fin or using fewer towels during a hotel stay.

But first, businesses must put sustainability at the front and centre of all that they do. If efforts are not tracked, they will be piecemeal at best.

**Gracia Chiang**

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### COMING UP

**NEXT ISSUE:**  
**MAY 23, 2014**

**CHINA** Guangzhou becomes more attractive for leisure

**SRI LANKA** No longer just for the privileged few

**BUSINESS TRAVEL** Our roundtable assesses the climate for corporate spending on meetings

**CRUISES** Guide to the latest developments in South-east Asia's ports of call

**VIEW FROM THE TOP** Tan Wee Kiat, CEO, Gardens by the Bay Singapore

### WE LIKE



For more inspiration on how travel and tourism can make a difference, read UNWTO's *Tourism Stories - How tourism enriched my life*. Millions of people around the globe work in the tourism sector, and this book puts a face to some of them. Published last year, 15 individuals share how a career in tourism has helped transform their lives and their communities. Available for download at [www.e-unwto.org/content/v32763](http://www.e-unwto.org/content/v32763)







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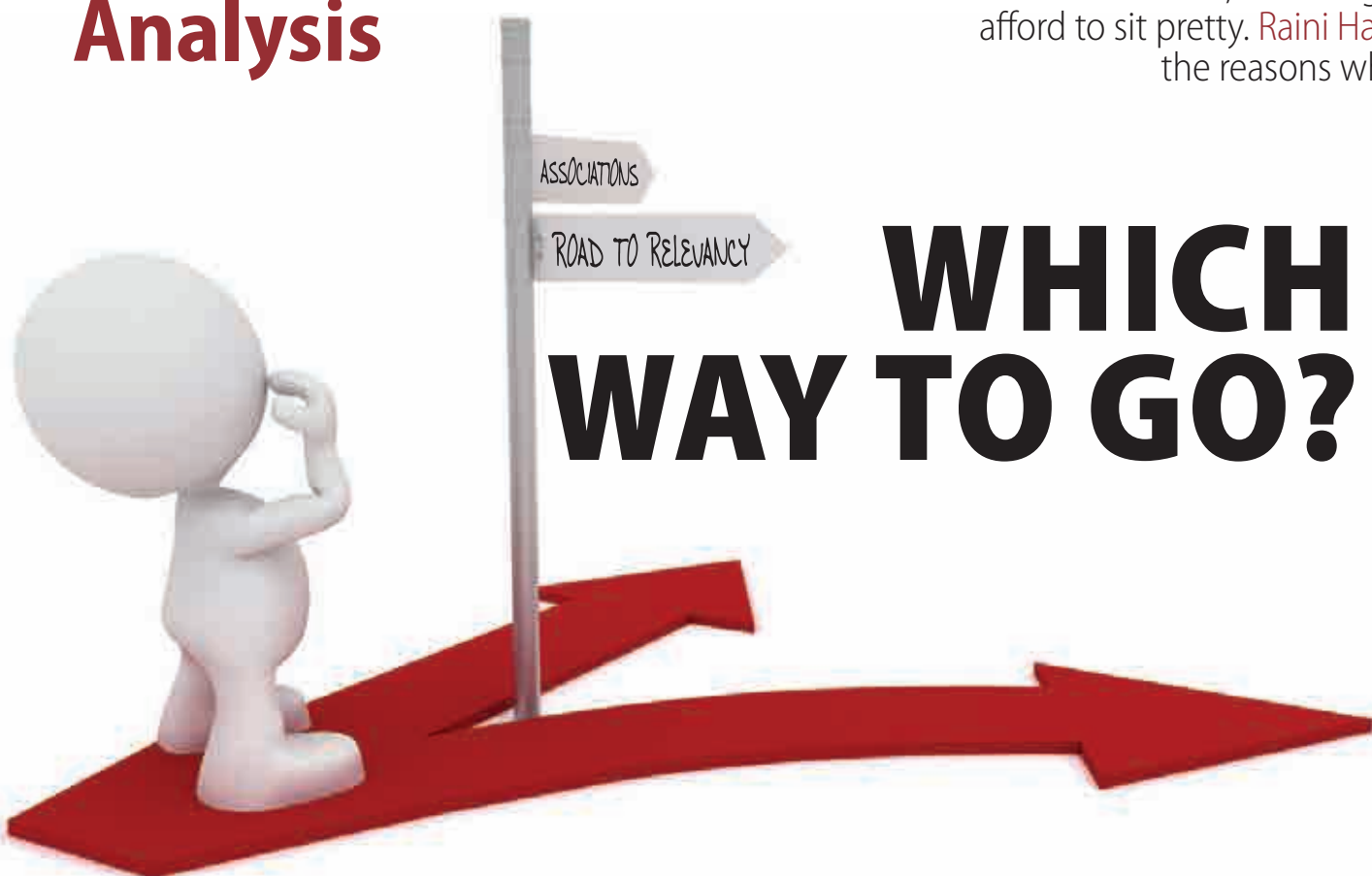
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# Analysis

Few associations, including those in travel & tourism, can afford to sit pretty. **Raini Hamdi** and **Gracia Chiang** look at the reasons why and the battle for relevancy



A number of powerful generational, cultural and economic forces are colliding to create a perfect storm that will make the next five to 20 years some of the toughest ever faced by associations, wrote Belinda Moore, CEO, Queensland-based Australasian Society of Association Executives, in her popular paper, *Membership is Dead*.

Moore posed the following questions to associations:

- Are younger members joining your association and then leaving after a year or two? Or not joining at all?
- Are you struggling to get people to your events?
- Are you battling to recruit quality volunteers?
- Is your board full of men aged over 50?
- Are competitive organisations forming around you?

Few associations today – no matter where they sit and whether they represent mathematicians or travel & tourism members – could say that these forces are not impacting them, that they do not have to reconsider their value proposition to members in order to be in business.

“I have to say that my own experience of recent times back this up,” said Simon Pryor, CEO, The Mathematical Association of Victoria, Australia, interviewed at the recent IT&CM China organised by TIG Asia Media.

Pryor said associations were built in the ’50s to ’70s by and for baby-boomers. As these people retire, there’s a gap in members and in skilled volunteers needed to run groupings.

On the other hand, younger people have different needs and want value “right here and now,” said Pryor. Today’s technology, too, enables one to be connected with another and to search the Internet for virtually any how-to, rendering a key purpose of associations as being the repository of knowledge useless.

Unless associations acknowledge the issue, competitors who are more nimble, flexible and more able to engage the market, will take their place and represent their industry or profession, said Pryor.

He gave an example of the then Meetings Industry Association of Australia (MIAA), a traditional body with state branches and committees, people serving on working parties and running events, etc, being outdone by a new competitor,

the PCO Association, which “has a small board, a small secretariat and contracted out everything else”. The new competitor started with free online membership and, overnight, PCOs were connected with emails, webinars and so on.

“MIAA then evolved into Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) and the fact MEA has survived and kept its membership base tells me it has adapted,” said Pryor.

## Why join?

Travel and tourism associations aren’t spared and it seems the more specialised and attuned to member needs they are, the more likely they are to survive. Younger industry movers-and-shakers, such as hotel owner Loh Lik Peng, director, Singapore-based Unlisted Collection, said he would only join an association “if it has a deep enough industry representation and an active and dynamic agenda”.

“We are currently not part of any association other than the Singapore Hotel Association,” said Loh. “I think some trade/industry organisations have become a fiefdom for long-serving executives and they sometimes lose touch with their purpose and members, so they stagnate and often do not have any real use anymore.”

“The really useful ones are the ones where there is deep industry engagement and strong links with government, regulators and other trade and industry groups that allow for industry growth and effective lobbying.”

The new group CEO of Thailand-based Asian Trails, Laurent Kuenzle, unlike his mentor and predecessor, Luzi Matzig, is not active in associations. But Kuenzle said he believes associations are still needed – but only if they have “a hands-on, pragmatic approach to solve issues and the connections to do so, in particular issues that need to bring together the private and government sectors in order to reach progress or conclusions”.

Echoing the sentiment, Marc Dardenne, CEO of Singapore-based Patina Hotels & Resorts, said: “We acknowledge there is a need for these associations as they serve a purpose in networking opportunities. However, they will need to rethink their business model and take into consideration the needs of a new generation.”

## New roads

Associations such as PATA and WTTC

said they are doing just that. One of the first things Martin Craigs did after joining PATA as CEO in late 2011 was to roll out and rebrand PATA as PATA Next-Gen. Just before the PATA board meeting and AGM in Zhuhai from May 16-18, a symposium to attract young professionals and students from overseas and around China will be held, one in several youth forums which have been organised to date.

New members such as TripAdvisor and Lonely Planet have joined PATA, while next generation-minded activist leadership is coming through at all levels, from chapters to executive board, said Craigs. At the same time, strategic sponsors have been retained, as well as NTOs “who certainly now see the advocacy payback with the EU ETS and UK APD”.

Craigs is set to announce a profit for 2013 at the AGM, a first for PATA in four years during which it lost US\$1 million.

He believes “we changed the mindset on PATA, its external business building rationale capabilities and internal self belief”. Said Craigs: “We now have sponsors asking to upgrade their support and connectivity, increased demand for many more PATAcademies and more intern associates than we can handle (71 applications for 48 places in 2014).”

“We cannot make a living being only a speed-dater or librarian. We add value via reinvention, and driving change in mindsets at all levels, i.e. thought leadership and insightful research, leading to aligned advocacy that has already saved the industry over US\$1 billion with the EU ETS and

UK APD climbdowns.”

WTTC likewise said it has been able to increase membership, from 80 to 135 in three years, all “big businesses” from the various sectors such as car rental, airports and technology companies.

Said CEO David Scowsill: “So we genuinely represent the whole industry now for all of those sectors. We sit up here as the private sector alongside UNWTO which represents government, and below WTTC you have the airline specialists like IATA and (CLIA) for cruising, etc.

“What we do is make sure that all of us (PATA, IATA, etc) are focused on the same four issues: tax, visas, sustainability and connectivity (infrastructure, technology).

“So we use the same data, research, information. When I stand up to talk, I’ll be saying the same thing as Martin Craigs, Tony Tyler. That’s important. It only happened in the last two years (since the coalition that we formed, *TIG Asia e-Daily*, April 20, 2012).

Scowsill believes WTTC, IATA, PATA, CLIA, etc, all have different functions but for WTTC, advocacy – with those at the highest levels – is one area which is crucial.

As the tourism minister in most countries doesn’t have much power in the government organisation, “we need to go to the boss”, said Scowsill.

He cited the example of the US which stopped issuing visas after 9/11. This had WTTC’s China members screaming they could not have customers waiting 150 days, having to fly to a consulate, being fingerprinted and interviewed. The US, too, was losing all its business.

WTTC brought the Obama administration to its summit in Las Vegas to focus on the issues of visas and security. “Then Obama suddenly understood he needed to do something because he had a commerce department that was trying to get people to come to the US and a state department that was treating people as terrorists and not giving anyone visas. When you have that conflict in the government, the only person who can solve that is Obama.

“We operate at a very high level and sometimes you cannot understand the impact immediately. Other times it happens very fast,” said Scowsill.

We cannot make a living being only a speed-dater or librarian. We add value via reinvention, and driving changes in mindsets at all levels...

**Martin Craigs**  
CEO, PATA



# Analysis

What happens when OTAs turn into jealous lovers, seeking to control whom hotels work with and the rates that surface online? By Xinyi Liang-Pholsena



OTAs clearly use hoteliers' lack of understanding and usage of digital media to their advantage...However, if you have the leverage of scale, brand and your own marketing prowess, it is easier to deal with them.

**Chetan Patel**  
Vice president, strategic marketing & e-commerce  
Onyx Hospitality Group

## A COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP

OTAs have grown to become a significant distribution channel for many Asian hotels, but it's a precarious relationship that can require a lot of tiptoeing around.

An allegation circulating is that some OTAs use their market dominance to prohibit hotels from working with competitors.

A Bangkok-based distribution director, who requested for anonymity, said: "Among the OTAs, it's pretty much Agoda who's more upset about hotels working with alternative booking channels whereas the others are not too concerned."

"The main challenge with Agoda is also maintaining rate parity. This has been going on for many years; it's not unusual for Agoda to call, email or Skype us to seek an explanation. We try to solve rate parity on a regular basis."

Rate parity agreements, which require hotels to guarantee that room rates on their own websites are not below that offered by OTAs, remain a divisive issue.

Chetan Patel, vice president, strategic marketing & e-commerce, Onyx Hospitality Group, said: "At times it is quite difficult to manage (OTAs') expectations

on rate parity as some wholesale rates inevitably end up on online channels where they are not supposed to. OTA partners therefore expect us to resolve such issues immediately, but identifying the intermediaries is not always that easy."

The same director who did not want to be named explained: "Sometimes due to factors out of our control like time differences or currency fluctuations, there will be a bit of rate difference, say, five to 10 baht, between our own website and OTAs."

On the other hand, hotels have unwittingly ended up in OTAs' all-inclusive promotions, which, as the result of bundling various travel components, could make rooms appear cheaper than was supplied, ruffling the feathers of other intermediaries, added the director.

"(If OTAs) purchase the rooms at wholesale price and then make a mark-up, the prices will be lower than our website – this has happened before and we stopped working with such partners," said Kiatiphong Phatarakulbaramee, director of sales at Rembrandt Hotel & Towers Bangkok, which also does not offer inventory on bed banks.

"We try to be friends with everyone. We will marry people who want to be married with us – it must be a win-win relationship for everyone," he remarked, while at the same time reminding all hotels to be "careful" of OTAs. "You have to keep monitoring what's being posted on these sites, whether they are promoting your hotels according to agreements, for instance."

When asked to comment, an Agoda.com spokesperson insisted there is no problem with the relationship between OTAs and hotels. He stated: "We work very hard to make sure the rate (customers) pay is the best rate we can get from the hotel. Our hotel partners understand this and value the material production they get."

"They also work very hard, and they support us with great deals and access to hard-to-find rooms, which helps us keep our large customer base happy. We are extremely thankful for the unique support we get from hotels in our region."

The broad sentiment is that the onus is on hotels to manage their relationships with OTAs or take active steps to prevent any bullying.

Enrico Wibawa, director of e-commerce, Compass Hospitality, said: "Getting online or being listed online is becoming more expensive. If a hotel has enough budget, it is less likely to be less dependent on OTAs; but for smaller properties, OTAs offers a conducive partnership for global marketing."

Onyx's Patel opined that hotels are largely to blame for their dependency on OTAs. "OTAs clearly used hoteliers' lack of understanding and usage of digital media to their advantage. Hotels tend to see OTAs as a channel that does not charge fees upfront and therefore ignore the distribution costs that add up in the long run," he said.

"Furthermore, many hotels do not focus on building their presence online, often disregarding digital marketing completely as a complicated and expensive endeavour. In our experience, the cost of digital marketing is far lower than the distribution costs paid out to third parties. If hotels do not want to pay for these then dependency on OTAs is the result."

Recognising this, Rembrandt Hotel & Towers Bangkok recently changed its hotel booking engine to SiteMinder to allow for more efficient rate updates across distribution channels, shared Kiatiphong.

Said Patel: "We acknowledge the role (of OTAs) and therefore spread our business among several channels while maintaining good relationships. That is not to say that we do not have our challenges with them. However, if you have the leverage of scale, brand and your own marketing prowess, it is easier to deal with them."



## View from the top

He fills the big shoes of Luzi Matzig as the new CEO of Asian Trails Group. But apart from the new title, nothing has changed at the regional DMC – or will change. Laurent Kuenzle tells Raini Hamdi why

# SMOOTH SUCCESSION

### How did you feel when you stepped into the office as the CEO on January 1?

I felt no difference. I've been with the company and grew with the people for 25 years. Luzi employed me to work with Diethelm Cambodia in 1995. We co-founded Asian Trails in 1999 (with Roger Haumueller, MD, Asian Trails Thailand).

So we think as entrepreneurs would. We don't always agree, but we discuss it with one another, make a decision and find the best way forward for the company.

If I were coming from the outside, I might feel a difference. But we've worked together for years and the succession had been in the planning for a while. Many of our people had thought that it would be natural for me to take over one day, and now that has happened.

### Are you driving the company or is Luzi still driving it?

Luzi is now chairman of Asian Trails. As CEO, I drive and run the company, with goals set by the chairman and the board. Obviously as chairman, he is still my boss. But I run the day to day. As chair, he is not always in the company and he plays an advisor role, which is important for me. As much as I like to listen to young people who bring in new ideas and inspirations, I also like to listen to people with a wealth of experience.

### So what's changed?

Not a lot. Before, I was running our offices outside Thailand – Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, China, Malaysia and Indonesia – as group MD reporting to Luzi. Now, Thailand is under my wings as well, along with corporate responsibilities such as finance, which Luzi used to do.

It's interesting to have the whole company under my wings.

### But as CEO, surely you want to make your own mark? At 45, surely you have your own ideas?

What I want is continued success of what we have achieved so far. I don't want to revolutionise the company but I do want us to adapt to changes that are happening everywhere, whether it is our source mar-

kets that are changing, or tour operators and travel agencies.

So I have to anticipate change and lead the organisation towards a future goal. Today everything is moving faster. More than ever, I have to ask myself, am I still doing the right things? Am I asking myself the right questions for the organisation?

### So your dream is only continuity - how boring!

(Laughs) You look disappointed! You thought I was going to tell you how I would revolutionise the company, that I would be changing everything, close this, open that. No.

We are a top quality, well-managed DMC with offices throughout South-east Asia and China. We've gone with the times and with new source markets, some more successfully than others. We've always had a pioneering spirit and a spirit of risk-taking in business. So there is no need to reinvent.

I also do not have plans to expand. I don't believe we need to open an office in, for example, Singapore, because that's commodity travel. What does it take to give two airport transfers and a half-day city tour in Singapore?

It would be different if it were MICE or events (i.e. more value add) but we don't want to open in Singapore just for the MICE business. Same for Hong Kong, which I can handle out of my office in Beijing with suppliers in Hong Kong.

### Have you seen the best days of the business, considering how competitive everyone says it is?

If we were a travel agency I will tell you, probably. But we're not. We are a real



DMC which provides a service at a destination and sells it either as FIT, package or tailor-made tours. There is no money to be made if we're simply handling point-to-point or repeat business.

### What would you do if you were a travel agency?

It depends on the source market. In source markets such as Switzerland or France, where the client goes into the agency armed with information he's got from the Internet, the travel agency should know his client like the back of his hand, take apart the information he has – often too much information – and be able to recommend what is perfect for him.

The agency has to build up the trust factor and the value of the relationship with the client. If you're a travel agency that does that, you may be smaller than before with fewer clients, but you have a distinct client base.

And as a DMC, I have to anticipate how the tour operators and the travel agencies are changing so I am able to give them the new services they need.

### What about the tour operating business? Are the best days over?

I don't think so. Again, it depends on the

## 10 NEED TO KNOWS ABOUT LAURENT KUENZLE

- **Who is in your family?** My partner Noom and my dog Flory
- **What do you do for fun?** Travel
- **Your ideal vacation?** My boat
- **How do you book your own leisure trips?** With or through friends
- **What are you reading right now?** *The hundred-year-old man who climbed out the window and disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson
- **How do you stay healthy?** Gym
- **Favourite food?** Thai
- **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Chocolate
- **Your pet peeve, something that never fails to annoy you?** People who are always right
- **Most people don't know that you can...** cook

source market. If you are a tour operator in a fast-moving source market, such as India or Brazil, and you don't adapt to the trends of that source market – how it books, what service it demands, what niches have appeared, such as weddings and honeymoons in India – then I doubt if you would be able to survive in the long term.

### How do you compete with the likes of Exotissimo, Diethelm, etc?

Exotissimo is strong in France, while we are strong in Brazil, Germany or Switzerland. Destination Asia is stronger in the UK.

Aside from different source markets, you try to compete based on product differentiation, although admittedly that is becoming difficult. There are new possibilities, such as border openings between Myanmar and Thailand, and when one DMC picks up on it, another follows suit, so where do you stand?

You compete on getting the trust of the client. A tour operator who trusts me will know that if I say, 'this product is the right one for your source market', it is indeed the right one. If he does not have that trust, he'll be asking a lot of questions.

### You went on a one-year sabbatical before assuming the CEO role. How did that help?

It's one of the best things I've done in my life, on both the personal and business level.

I took the time to meet so many friends and family members, and it's marvelous that they also took the time for me. I travelled to so many countries and made so many observations. I enjoyed starting conversations with people again. When you're in business, the last thing you want to do when you get into a plane is to socialise with other people. But when you have time on your hands, you start to be more proactive and have conversations with people about everything under the sun, including travel – what they think about travel today, what are their dreams in travel, and so on.

“What I want is continued success of what we have achieved so far. I don't want to revolutionise the company but I do want us to adapt to changes...”





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## HOTELS



### Best Western Unveils Eco - Resort in Ipoh

By Glenn de Souza  
Vice President International  
Operations - Asia & the Middle East  
Best Western International

Best Western International has unveiled a stunning new luxury resort in Malaysia, which is set to showcase the group's environmental credentials.

Nestled among the lush jungle-clad hills of the Malay Peninsula, BEST WESTERN PREMIER The Haven Ipoh, is quite literally a "haven" for nature lovers and those in search of place to unwind, away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Guests will be able to relax with an extensive array of leisure facilities, including a spectacular four level lagoon style swimming-pool, tropical gardens, a jogging track, barbecue and picnic areas, a gymnasium, badminton & tennis courts, a children's playground, café and restaurant.

And in keeping with the resort's natural landscape, BEST WESTERN PREMIER The Haven Ipoh, also showcases impressive environmental credentials. It is one of the first properties in Malaysia to use 100 percent renewable energy, by harnessing the power of the wind and sun.

All of which means that our guests will have peace of mind, knowing their stay is in harmony with the surrounding environment.



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#### SULE SHANGRI-LA, YANGON, MYANMAR

The refurbished Traders Hotel, Yangon was relaunched end-April as Sule Shangri-La, Yangon, offering 484 rooms, three suites, meeting spaces, five dining outlets and a Health Club. A Celebration Package starts from US\$215 a night. Guests staying at least two nights in a Deluxe room between now and July 31 get a free one-way airport transfer and US\$40 in hotel credit.



#### BEST WESTERN PREMIER THE HAVEN, IPOH, MALAYSIA

Best Western Premier The Haven, Ipoh, has opened, using 100 per cent sustainable energy. It offers 100 rooms and suites and free Wi-Fi. Other amenities include a four-level swimming pool, tropical gardens, a jogging track, barbecue and picnic areas, a gym, badminton and tennis courts, a children's playground, café and restaurant.



#### JIXIAN MARRIOTT HOTEL, TIANJIN, CHINA

Marriott has launched carbon footprint-focused Jixian Marriott Hotel. The property in Tianjin offers 282 rooms, inclusive of eight suites and eight villas, as well as a fitness centre, swimming pool and spa with hot springs. F&B offerings include a Cantonese restaurant and a lounge; meeting facilities include one grand ballroom, one junior ballroom and eight function rooms.



#### HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS SINGAPORE CLARKE QUAY

InterContinental Hotels Group has opened the 442-room Holiday Inn Express Singapore Clarke Quay, located within a vibrant entertainment district, 20 minutes from Changi Airport and close to major museums. It has rolled out a special opening rate from US\$149++ per night, including free Wi-Fi and breakfast for two, for stays from now until July 31.

## ACTIVITIES

#### SKYLINE ROTORUA LAUNCHES ZIPLINE ACTIVITY

Skyline Rotorua in New Zealand has unveiled new soft adventure activities within its premises.

The company last month opened the Zoom Zipline, a high-speed twin zipline which descends 385m down the side of Mt Ngongotaha, a dormant volcano, followed by a unique 10m Quickjump system, and a 'freefall' from the landing platform.

It will also introduce the Luge (above), a gravity ride in a three-wheel cart using a unique braking and steering system, in Calgary, Canada in the middle of the year and in South Korea in the next two years.



#### POP-UP RESTAURANT TO OPERATE AT SINGAPORE'S DEFUNCT TANJONG PAGAR RAILWAY STATION

A fine-dining pop-up restaurant will be setting up shop within Singapore's historic Tanjong Pagar Railway Station in June, using the iconic architecture as a backdrop to showcase the city's varied cuisines.

Backed by Singapore Tourism Board (STB) through its Kickstart Fund that supports innovative lifestyle concepts and mooted by My Private Chef, a company that specialises in bespoke dining experiences, the first chapter of Stories: A Pop Up Restaurant will be held from June 26 to 29. It expects to host a maximum of 120 diners for weekend lunch and 180 diners for daily dinner, with a thematic menu reflecting the history of the dining venue.

One celebrity chef will helm each chapter of Stories but the location of the second chapter has not yet been disclosed.

The activity coincides with STB's second phase of its Tourism50 celebrations that urges locals to rediscover Singapore's long-standing attractions and icons. Tickets are priced from S\$188 (US\$150) to S\$248 and will be available on [www.myprivatechef.com.sg](http://www.myprivatechef.com.sg) from May 1. Advance reservations can be made at [dine@myprivatechef.com.sg](mailto:dine@myprivatechef.com.sg).

## TRANSPORTATION

#### ROYAL BRUNEI AIRLINES REVIVES BALI SERVICE

Royal Brunei Airlines will resume flights to Bali from July 26 with four weekly departures, after having terminated direct flights there in 2008.

Flights will depart Brunei's capital Bandar Seri Begawan on Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday every week while the return flights will run every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. The flights will be operated with Airbus A319 aircraft.



#### NEW SHINKANSEN SERVICE TO OPEN UP KANAZAWA

Japan's appeal as a tourist destination will receive a boost when a high-speed rail service from Tokyo to Kanazawa begins in spring 2015.

The Hokuriku Shinkansen is expected to create a new tourism route from Tokyo to Western Honshu, connecting Kanazawa in two-and-a-half hours, shaving off 80 minutes from the current duration.

East Japan Railway Company (JR East) chairman, Satoshi Seino, said it is likely that Hokuriku would be included in the popular JR pass.

#### THAI AIRASIA X ZOOMS IN ON SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN

Thai AirAsia X has officially gotten off the ground with the announcement of its first service to Seoul that will begin on June 17.

Flights to Seoul-Incheon will be operated daily out of Bangkok's Don Mueang Airport with Thai AirAsia's Airbus A330-300 aircraft. Flights depart Bangkok at 08.05 to touch down at 15.25, while return flights leave at 16.50 and arrive in Bangkok at 20.40.

Flights to Tokyo-Narita and Osaka are in the pipeline, and details will be announced in the near future.

## TECHNOLOGY

#### AMADEUS UNVEILS NEW-GENERATION HOTEL DISTRIBUTION MARKETPLACE

Content from hotel sources is integrated into one standardised format, allowing users easier comparison between prices. It can also be toggled to reflect the user's choice of business model from commission-based, service charge or net-rate/mark-up to negotiated rates.

The system can be accessed via Amadeus' travel agency retail platform, its corporate online booking tool and by third-parties through Amadeus' web services.



# Agency

Take heed of tech-savvy agencies that have transformed their businesses and pick up new ideas on how to do better

## INNOVATORS

# WIFI-ENABLED COACHES

By S Puvaneswary

Adam Kamal, general manager of Rakyat Travel, with counter staff

**WHO** Since he joined the company in October 2013, Adam Kamal, general manager of Rakyat Travel, has been devising ways to boost sales and enhance branding for his company.

He said: "I've attended many travel trade shows and seen technology for travel agencies being promoted and used, especially in developed countries, but local adoption is slow in Malaysia. This gives us a headstart in our plans for the near future."

**WHAT** As part of a marketing strategy, Rakyat Travel excursion coaches will soon be equipped with Wi-Fi services, with a roll-out planned for July, in conjunction with the delivery of its 13<sup>th</sup> coach.

Kamal said: "I think that we will be the first local travel agency in the country to offer Wi-Fi services on excursion coaches. Currently, we are negotiating with a few local telecommunication providers on the speed of this offering."

"While express coaches already offer this feature, their Wi-Fi quality is not satisfactory because a limited number of users can log on to the service at any one time. We want to make sure that our complimentary offering allows up to 40 people to use the service at a time."

Rakyat also plans to roll out in the third quarter this year a mobile application that can be downloaded on Android and Apple platforms. Through this application, consumers will be able to book tickets, hotel rooms and tours directly from their smartphones.

**WHY** Said Kamal: "Everybody carries a smartphone, and a hassle-free option for making bookings will put us at an advantage. It is also an environmentally friendly option."

"We're providing Wi-Fi services on our excursion business to cater for the needs of travellers who want to share pictures immediately after taking them. Tourists today are into

social media. I see this as a way of promoting the company and the nation as a whole.

"In order to get linked to Wi-Fi services, our clients will need to 'like' us on Facebook, and that is our strategy of promoting Rakyat Travel. Upon connection, users will also be connected to the company's website to log in to the service."

"Since we also rent out our excursion coaches to other travel agencies and corporate companies, I believe this new feature will increase demand for our coaches."

**TARGET** Kamal believes that the roll-out of new services will ultimately improve the company's bottom line. "We hope to double our sales within three years of the roll-out of our smartphone app. We also hope that the Wi-Fi services will result in increased volume of business for our transport division," he said.



## ASK THE EXPERT

# BIG DATA CAN DRIVE REAL BUSINESS GROWTH

Consumer shopping behaviour, preferences and expectations have shifted dramatically over the past year or two. People are influenced by what their friends and even what perfect strangers say on social networks, and prefer booking tickets and hotels online than going in person to a physical office. They want smooth online experiences, and are quick to switch brands and services if they think a better deal awaits elsewhere.

We've found that companies only have about three seconds to connect with their customers before they lose interest. It's imperative for travel agencies and hoteliers to adapt, and the best put this new mobile, often fickle, opinionated customer at the heart of their businesses.

Many businesses today have a lot of data about their customers, but it is the usage of information that exists internally and merging it with external data that makes the difference in pushing forth growth and innovation. For example, TripAdvisor now has about 150 million reviews of hotels, restaurants and places to visit all around the world. How do

businesses in the travel industry harness these massive amount of consumer-generated data to understand new trends and launch new services?

The harnessing of massive amount of data in various forms, images, text and numbers, collectively called 'big data', offers the path to insights into the future and competitive advantage through effective information management. Through the strategic use of information such as sales cycles, complaints and even what customers are discussing on social media channels, businesses can innovate more quickly, acquire and retain customers, lower operational costs and drive growth.

**Case Study:** Royal Caribbean International wanted to gain better insight into customer behaviour and enhance workflow on its innovative new cruise ships. The company deployed a big data solution that connects up 325 point-of-service terminals, 50 tablets, and 300 digital signs with back-end servers running Microsoft SQL Server and Windows Server. The intelligent system shares data with show-ticketing systems,

photo galleries, and in-room entertainment to give new insights into spending habits and enable more effective selling strategies while cutting operating costs with digital signatures and electronic receipts. Connecting 35 handheld devices with existing IT infrastructure and food storage equipment has also improved workflow throughout the ships, including reducing food-inspection time from five to two hours. Finally, the solution has enhanced the guest experience by seamlessly sharing data among multiple devices and venues to provide ready access to photos as well as availability in restaurants, spas and shows.

Many businesses I've spoken with have said that big data is too complex. In reality, big data is an incredible opportunity for businesses to get actionable insights that can deliver tangible results. They can use these insights to launch new services, combat against competitors or simply just serve customers better. As businesses learn about big data, one thing becomes clear: big data is an unprecedented opportunity for business growth, with big rewards.

Many businesses say big data is too complex...In reality, it is an incredible opportunity to get actionable insights that can deliver tangible results.



David Boden  
Industry lead, retail & consumer goods  
Microsoft Asia



# Report Sporting events

## What do Asian destinations need to do to attract more world-class sporting events?

**COX** Singapore is a good example of an Asian country spearheading the initiative to draw more world-class events. It has turned the F1 into much more than a race with music and entertainment while the Singapore Sports Hub is a quality infrastructure development that has already attracted the WTA Championship later this year. Other Asian territories have the benefit of larger markets and can learn from Singapore's example to start.

But major sporting events like Wimbledon or The US Masters did not just pop up overnight; they are steeped in years of history and heritage. World-class sporting events take time to build, and Asia has to understand that it will take many years of slogging it out and building a local fan base, heritage and a profile before becoming permanent fixtures on the sporting calendar.

**NG** It is important for a destination to first recognise the growing (importance) of sporting events, and then the government and sports industry players should heavily invest in better facilities and amenities, dedicated divisions in the government to assist growth, sports sponsorships from organisations and most importantly, the expertise of local sports event organisers to help put together a successful event.

**DE SOUZA** If the parent body of a sport is based in a country, it automatically influences world-class sporting events to be hosted there. Governments definitely (need) a dedicated team and organisation working towards the singular goal of winning bids for such events.

**VAN DEN BORN** You need to organise sporting events related to your destination (strengths). Thailand is famous for beaches, so why not organise beach volleyball or a major water sports event? Phuket is a great destination for these types of events, although recently there have been sewerage problems around Karon Beach. Some people want to promote/attract new types of sporting events when we are not looking after our natural assets, which could support more (locally) relevant activities.

## What are the top priorities in selecting a destination for such events? What components need looking into to successfully execute them?

**EVANS** Good infrastructure is the most important thing, plus of course good prize money, which depends on the types of sports too. World-class events have different gauges, and I reckon at least US\$100,000 for a cycling event.

Air access to and within a destination is definitely a major concern too. Singapore is ideal for this (access) factor because it is a well-connected hub and travelling around the country is no problem too.

**NG** Geographical location plays a crucial role: easy access into a country is a plus point, especially when the country is supportive of incoming traffic for major sporting events. (Event) participants are also tourists who would be exploring the country before and after the event, so travel, mobility and sightseeing are some of the drivers to (attract visitors).

Also important is the support of a wide

You need to organise events related to your destination (strengths). Some people want to promote/attract new events when we are not looking after our own assets, which could support more locally relevant activities.

The (host) country should be deemed 'safe' to travel to, with good connections, public transportation infrastructure, a range of local and international hotel brands, as well as hefty prize money and appearance fee.

Ultimately, it comes down to the experience of the attendees and what they are able to take away from the event – if attendees/fans have a good experience, then you are already ahead of the game.



Hans van den Born  
Managing director  
Diethelm Travel Thailand



Saini Vermeulen  
Head of international sales  
Panorama Tours Malaysia



John Cox, co-founder of MVIP, a China-based firm specialising in tailor-made sports and entertainment travel experiences for luxury consumers

# BEING A GOOD SPORT

industry network, which includes governing bodies, events companies, travel consultants, medical services, hotels and transportation services. Government support plus good planning from reputable organisers are important to build confidence in a sporting event, especially when you command an international following. Reliable organisers will ensure a smooth, fun and essentially safe event, and provide a holistic network from marketing and promotions to safety measures.

**VERMEULEN** The country should be deemed 'safe' to travel to, with good connections, public transportation infrastructure, and a range of local and international hotel brands. Hefty prize money and appearance fee will also entice world-class sporting personalities to participate.

**DE SOUZA** Infrastructure is foremost, so

is a high-quality, experienced team to direct the planning well ahead of the event. If in-house resources are unavailable, then hiring experienced consultants to head the major verticals is the best investment a country can make.

**COX** Ultimately it comes down to the experience of attendees and what they take away from the event – if fans have a good experience, then you are already ahead of the game. There must be loads of preparation and planning for every imaginable scenario; the more the organisers plan for contingencies, the more likely the event will go smoothly and be a success. Finer details should go into every aspect of the hospitality, from language support to personalised services.

**Sporting events are a chance to build tourism in lesser-known areas of the**

## country. True?

**NG** Yes. Sporting events are undoubtedly a contributor to the economy and tourism sector of a lesser-known country, for example, the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics. Smaller events in Malaysia such as the recent Music Run 2014 or the Powerman Duathlon are some activities that bring participants from other states and countries to converge together, thus boosting local as well as international tourism.

**VERMEULEN** Yes, as long as the event is executed properly and there is enough lead time to promote it overseas. Event organisers and NTOs should engage travel consultants to package the event with accommodation and tours so that tourists will extend their stay after the event.

**VAN DEN BORN** People often say this, but I am not at all convinced. It comes



How can Asian destinations play a better game at attracting major sporting events? Our panel of sports and tourism experts shares their views in this roundtable discussion. By S Puvaneswary, Greg Lowe, Gracia Chiang, Paige Lee Pei Qi and Shekhar Niyogi

Good infrastructure is the most important thing, plus good prize money, which depends on the types of sports too. World-class events have different gauges... Air access to and within a destination is also a major concern.

Government support plus good planning from reputable organisers are important...Reliable organisers will ensure a smooth, fun and essentially safe event, and provide a holistic network.

Bidding/hosting of events is a problem only if the host country does not have the foresight. Gathering empirical data like footfalls, source markets, preferred tourism packages and yield per hotel room are easily available.

investment to attend. If it is a global event (the travel agency) has to understand that they will have global customers who have different tastes, languages and needs, so the product on offer has to reflect that.

**Many countries don't have existing data on sports tourism and its economic impact, thus making strategic decisions on bidding/hosting of events a difficulty. Do you see this as a problem?**

**EVANS** It is not a problem at all. It is very difficult to measure such economic impacts. For example, my group spent three days before an event and four days after to tour around Singapore's Night Safari and Marina Bay Sands, spending an awful amount of money although it is hard to track the exact fiscal amount. We don't have to measure it but it is obviously common sense that there is a lucrative return with events. And if there is no financial impact, why do so many people want to host sporting events?

**NG** Yes, facts and figures are needed when making strategic decisions on bidding processes. With so many countries involved in the process of bidding, it is crucial to be able to convince the decision-making bodies of the competence of a destination and its people in handling major sporting events.

**DE SOUZA** It is a problem only if the host country does not have the foresight. Gathering empirical data such as footfalls, source markets, preferred tourism packages and products bought, and yield per hotel room are all easily available. The positive economic impact of tourism is a given. Look at Sharjah (in UAE), which has become a cricket hub and you would realise everything can be made available if there is passion and interest.

**What other issues/impediments need to be addressed?**

**COX** The whole booking process needs to be as transparent and smooth as possible. For the World Cup in Brazil this year, ticket holders have their visa fee waived, which is a great example of how sports and tourism agencies can work together to make things easier for the fans.

In terms of broader monetisation, there is definitely a need to educate Asian businesses about sponsorship. The Asian Sponsorship Association was founded in Singapore last year to tackle this lack of awareness and hopefully to increase the attractiveness of Asia for event organisers.

**DE SOUZA** We need complete coordination between all stakeholders and agencies, pivoting around the NTO. Easy issuance of visas is crucial, as are flight connectivity from prime source markets, widespread and easy sale of tickets, high hotel room inventory, entertainment and fine-dining opportunities, and top-class transportation options.

**NG** Different markets have their own unique challenges. For Malaysia, marketing and promotion of events will be more impactful if the media broadcast high-profile sports events happening in the country to the world. This will definitely go a long way in convincing decision-makers, participants, supporters and the whole network that Malaysia is capable of hosting world-class sporting events.



Wayne Evans, director of Lion Sports Management in Australia focusing on the management of professional and up-and-coming cyclists

Gloria Ng, director of Dirigo Events, which owns and manages the annual Standard Chartered KL Marathon in Malaysia

Brandon de Souza, chairman and managing director of India-based Tiger Sports Marketing, a sports and events management company

back to focusing on directly promoting sports or events that are relevant to your destination, like water sports in Thailand. Otherwise, the event has to be remarkably unique to make it worthwhile traveling to the (lesser-known) destination. In Thailand's Buriram, they have built (Formula 3 and GT) racing tracks, but that's a seven-hour drive from Bangkok. I am not sure the events are strong enough to make a lot of people want to make that journey.

**Are hotels/travel agencies/other tourism players good at maximising opportunities from sporting events? How can they improve?**

**VERMEULEN** It is easier for hotels to benefit from sporting events as they draw international spectators. It is not so easy for travel consultants to get a piece of the cake since organisers book hotels directly and may only use tour operators for transfers and tours – if at all. To get a bigger share of the market, travel agencies should be proactive and approach organisers with their services and see how they can work in partnership.

**NG** With the availability and accessibility of social media and online booking platforms, it has become very easy for both the seller and the intended buyer to 'meet'. We are starting to see some travel industry players focusing on sports events

travel packages utilising such platforms. More competitive packages or packages more tailor-made to the sport as opposed to run-of-the-mill programmes would be good.

**VAN DEN BORN** Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races has been a very successful event, so this is a good example of where the recently launched Bangkok Riverside Marketing Partnership (an alliance of hotels along the Chao Phraya River) could look at developing something water-related so we can have sports events on the river. Opportunities are out there.

**DE SOUZA** There are selfish individual stakeholder agencies who would cash in on the event, but they should be encouraged to maximise opportunities (for others) from sporting events, which is where travel agency associations can play a part. Most tourism stakeholders operate in an insular manner, fixated on their own profit motives rather than collaborating to build a bigger event and market with ancillary products. That can help larger revenues to be accrued by all.

**What support do travel agencies need from event organisers/NTOs/venues?**

**VAN DEN BORN** Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) needs to consult with hoteliers and DMCs about what they are

going to promote before developing a campaign. Often it is not that relevant in terms of the type of promotion or the target market. It will be much better if TAT involves the local industry early in the planning stage.

**VERMEULEN** Many sports organisers do not engage tour operators to assist them with logistics, gala dinner and marketing of the event overseas. Organisers should work with DMCs to reach out to the right audience and offer them sales incentives.

**DE SOUZA** Once dates are announced, travel agencies need help in putting together attractive packages to lure people to make the trip – prohibitive pricing can be a huge detriment. NTOs need to spell out clear policies on visas and incentives for large inbound groups, hotels on room allocation, event organisers on ticket allocation and venues on streamlining group entry facilities.

**COX** Travel agencies would benefit from marketing support in overseas markets, on-the-ground resources to support overseas guests, and services and/or products designed for guests that may have travelled around the world to be there. Much of the sales process is educating travellers on what to expect from their experience at the event and why they should make the



# Guide Serviced residences

Operators are switching on the chic factor to make younger road warriors feel more at home. By [Raini Hamdi](#), [Paige Lee Pei Qi](#), [Xinyi Liang-Pholsena](#) and [S Puvaneswary](#)

## IT FEELS LIKE HOME

### Citadines on Bourke Melbourne



“(Travellers want) flexible services and spaces in modern apartments that are designed with sophistication.”

**Kenneth Rogers**  
Regional GM-Australia and Indonesia  
The Ascott Limited

### CHIC FACTOR

Conceptualised by design studio, Woods Bagot, to reflect the vibrancy of Melbourne. The property is designed as a lane way connecting two renowned shopping strips, Bourke Street and Little Collins Street, and within walking distance to the theatre district, restaurants, cafés, cinemas and parks. There are 380 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments.

### COMPANY

Singapore-based The Ascott Limited celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year with more than 34,000 apartments globally under three brands: Ascott The Residence (33 properties), Citadines Apart’hotel (76) and Somerset Serviced Residence (61).

### CHIC FUTURE

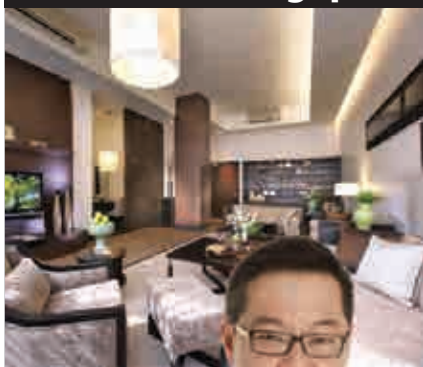
Ascott has 61 Citadines with 15 more to open in cities across Asia, Europe and the Gulf region.

### AGENCY SALES

Bookings from travel agencies rose more than 30 per cent in 2013 over 2012. Ascott offers wholesale rates, dynamic rates and direct connectivity for live inventory and holds joint promotions with agencies.

“We were the first global serviced residence company to have our own GDS code to make it easier for travel agencies to access rates and availability of our properties,” said Kenneth Rogers, regional GM-Australia and Indonesia.

### Orchard Scotts Residences, Singapore



“Today’s travellers are increasingly discerning and look for trendy options, personalised service and convenience.”

**Arthur Kiong**  
CEO, Far East Hospitality  
Singapore

### CHIC FACTOR

Winner, residential category, of the 2009 FIABCI Prix d’ Excellence Awards, the highest honour in international real estate.

Facilities include a spa pavilion, wine cellar, barbeque cabanas and extended dining lounges for private entertainment options. It even allocates space for guests to walk their pets within the property.

Location is in the Newton district, the fringe of Singapore’s Orchard Road shopping belt.

### COMPANY

Far East Hospitality (FEH) has the most number of hotels (10) and serviced residences (eight) in Singapore (FEH) with over 3,600 units. Its goal is to offer “Singapore-inspired hospitality” for business and leisure travellers on short- and long-term stays, across a wide variety of accommodation options. “Other than business travellers, we also notice more short-stay bookings from family travellers who want the convenience of staying together,” said Arthur Kiong, CEO, FEH.

### CHIC FUTURE

A team has been instituted to devise future product concepts for FEH.

### AGENCY SALES

“We target all corporate segments of business travel and relocation, including travel agencies and corporate travel desks,” said Kiong.

### Klapsons The River Residences Bangkok



“We want to shape a new generation of travellers who are loyal to our brand through the fun and modern side of hospitality.”

**Nattamon Soupe**  
General manager  
Klapsons The River Residences Bangkok

### CHIC FACTOR

Chopard amenities, tailormade Klapsons pillows, personalised check-in. Soft touches and bold colours by William Sawaya of design firm Sawaya & Moroni add zest to rooms.

Situated in the tallest condominium in Bangkok, the property offers spectacular views and easy access to the city via personal ferry transfers to Saphan Taksin BTS station. There are 92 units, 25 private residences with a minimum contract of six months to one year and 67 designer serviced residences with contracts starting at one month.

### COMPANY

The brand, owned by the Lee family of Jit Sun Investments Singapore debuted in 2009 with the 17-room Klapsons The Boutique Hotel, Singapore. The residence is managed by Klapsons Thailand, a subsidiary of Raimon Land, in which the Lee family is a major shareholder.

### CHIC FUTURE

Plans are to roll out more Klapsons properties in Thailand and worldwide.

### AGENCY SALES

The strategy is to strengthen direct bookings through online initiatives like e-mail marketing, own branded website, Facebook and “a rough estimate of 20-30 per cent from OTAs or travel consultants”, said Nattamon Soupe, general manager, Klapsons The River Residences Bangkok.

### Treetops Executive Residences, Singapore



“Treetops aims to continue its green journey to become the leading eco-luxury serviced apartment in Singapore and the region.”

**Tay Hock Soon**  
General manager  
Treetops Executive Residences

### CHIC FACTOR

Located in Orange Grove Road, with the product and services embracing a green philosophy.

High efficiency air filters are fixed in every apartment unit (there are 220 suites), 100 per cent natural toiletries and non-toxic cleaning detergents are used, and its Sunbird Terrace Café serves organic food.

The first existing building in the service apartment industry to win the BCA Green Mark Gold Award (in 2010).

A retreat for the city dweller, yet it’s just minutes away from the Orchard Road shopping belt.

### COMPANY

Launched in September 2000, managed by DTZ Debenham Tie Leung Hospitality Management Services.

### CHIC FUTURE

The residence is in the final commissioning stage with the first vertical axis wind turbine system in Singapore.

This will capture waste energy and spin it for use in the basement car park at Treetops.

### AGENCY SALES

Treetops works with travel and relocation agencies in Asia-Pacific.



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# Guide Serviced residences

## Ovolo 222, Hong Kong



“There’s plenty of space within the (serviced apartment) sector to innovate.”

**Dirk Dalichau**  
COO  
Ovolo Group, Hong Kong

### CHIC FACTOR

Tucked in the trendy, up-and-coming district Sheung Wan, a neighbourhood with new independent galleries, pop-up boutiques, cafes and restaurants, with slices of old-world Hong Kong heritage and antique shopping within reach.

Residents hit the ground running: Ovolo is all-inclusive, with light-filled, smartly spaced room layouts. Upon arrival, guests receive a fully stocked minibar, a ‘loot bag’ of snacks and a set of premium Malin + Goetz toiletries. Free high-speed Wi-Fi and AppleTV are provided throughout the stay.

While previously the financial sector dominated its client base, increasingly Ovolo is seeing more transitory retail, brand and fashion executives make up the numbers. Catering to this demand, its apartments feature no black-out times, i.e. clients can stay months to years on end, and are able to adjust their tenure without a fixed duration. “We have found that rather than committing to long rental apartment leases, companies prefer more flexible monthly rentals, with the choice to extend or shorten their booking period readily available on their terms,” said Dirk Dalichau, COO, Ovolo Group.

### COMPANY

Hong Kong-based Ovolo Hotels, a young hospitality company, aims to do things a little differently with individually designed lifestyle properties that are all-inclusive, technology-focused and full of character in authentic, lively urban locales.

From one property in 2002, the group has grown to four hotels and two serviced apartments in Hong Kong and one boutique hotel in Melbourne, Australia, all under the Ovolo brand.

In 3Q14 it will launch a 162-room designer warehouse conversion hotel with restaurant, rooftop bar, meeting and event spaces in Southside, Hong Kong. Last month the group acquired the Oaks on Lonsdale in Melbourne.

### CHIC FUTURE

Further expansion is planned in Australia, the UK and South-east Asia. “Current trends indicate that increasing residential values will see new apartments decrease in size, making clever spatial design, flexibility and premium amenity choices ever more important to the chic-seeking clientele,” said Dalichau.

### AGENCY SALES

Because customers are self-reliant in making their own travel plans, Ovolo has shifted away from conventional travel agencies towards relocation agencies, property agencies and online and offline channels that encourage more direct bookings through its sales team and website.

“That said, the role of agencies and large multinational corporate clients remains important. We motivate these sectors to make reservations with us through promoting our flexible leasing terms, all-inclusive services, relationship development and by continuing to improve on our products each and every month,” said Dalichau.

## Capri by Fraser, Changi City/Singapore



“Created for the e-generation traveller.”

**Jasmine Lee**  
Regional director of technical services  
Fraser Hospitality, Singapore

### CHIC FACTOR

Spin & Play integrated launderettes on every floor come with Wii, Xbox Kinect, foosball, iPads, punching bags, TRX suspension training and Ciclotte to keep guests entertained between spin cycles.

Bicycles are available for guests to use.

Malin & Goetz bath amenities, designer Kartell chairs, ergonomically designed Herman Miller chairs, an iPod docking station and the latest home entertainment systems in suite.

### COMPANY

Singapore-based Fraser Hospitality has 92 properties with more than 15,500 residences worldwide (including pipeline) under three brands: Fraser Gold-Standard serviced residences (Fraser Suites, Fraser Place and Fraser Residence), Modena by Fraser and Capri by Fraser.

### CHIC FUTURE

Great potential, as reflected in the steady, high occupancy averaging 80 per cent at Capri by Fraser, Changi City/Singapore since its launch, said Jasmine Lee, regional director of technical services.

Two more have opened in Vietnam and Kuala Lumpur. Openings in major and secondary cities worldwide are being sought.

### AGENCY SALES

Since Capri by Fraser, Changi City/Singapore opened in 2012, at least 10 per cent of bookings have been from OTAs. New initiatives to motivate bookings from this sector include offering two-tier rates for weekend and weekday arrivals; free stays with free Internet and breakfast; and easy to book with 24/7 availability policy.

## E&O Residences, Kuala Lumpur



“Our main focus is to tap into the medium- and long-stay programmes, especially family travels from mid-haul markets.”

**Andy Teh**  
Group director of sales & marketing  
E&O Group

### CHIC FACTOR

Located in the trendiest part of the city, close to shopping malls and classy restaurants, plus a street market on Tuesdays/Fridays just outside the premises.

Its 200 units of one- and two-bedroom suites are the most spacious in the city (about 104m<sup>2</sup> and 133m<sup>2</sup> respectively).

Flexible leasing arrangements: guests can book for a minimum of one night to an unlimited period.

Resort ambience in the heart of the capital city. There’s an infinity pool and six cabana-styled jacuzzis with curtains to allow users some privacy if needed!

### COMPANY

E&O Residences Kuala Lumpur is an extension of Penang-based E&O Group’s expertise in hospitality management from running the heritage E&O Hotel and Lone Pine Hotel, both in Penang.

### CHIC FUTURE

E&O Residences aims to establish a global mix of business and leisure clientele, targeting both long-term corporate stays and short-term stays.

Sharing the name and pedigree of the Eastern & Oriental Hotel, the property will install more old photographs of Penang in its public areas and rooms soon.

### AGENCY SALES

Commissions on sales are made to OTAs, while traditional travel agencies are given one-year contracted rates.



## Destination South Korea

The country is kicking it up a notch by showing off its sporty side. Xinyi Liang-Pholsena looks at its efforts to promote this new segment

# BEYOND THE NATION'S SEOUL

**H**aving successfully built the country's tourism appeal on the foundations of *hallyu* (Korean wave), South Korea is now eyeing its sports and traditional martial arts as potential segments to woo visitors from abroad.

South Korea will host the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, an area that is currently under development and will see high-speed train services by 2017, according to Young M Jun, director, Frankfurt office, Korea Tourism Organization (KTO).

Marking one of the country's most anticipated openings in 2014 is Taekwondowon, a hub dedicated to the education, training and research of taekwondo in Jeollabuk Province, two-and-a-half hours from Seoul, Young revealed. Launched in April, the 230ha destination features a 5,000-seat arena, training facilities, a museum, theatre and sculpture garden.

"(Taekwondowon) is 10 years in the making, and is the first of its kind in the world. Previously, Kukkiwon in Seoul was the only taekwondo facility we had," he said. "We have signed a one-year MoU with Germany Taekwondo Federation and Asiana Airlines to extend benefits for members to visit the Taekwondowon through special packages this year. We plan to expand (this scheme) to other countries in future."

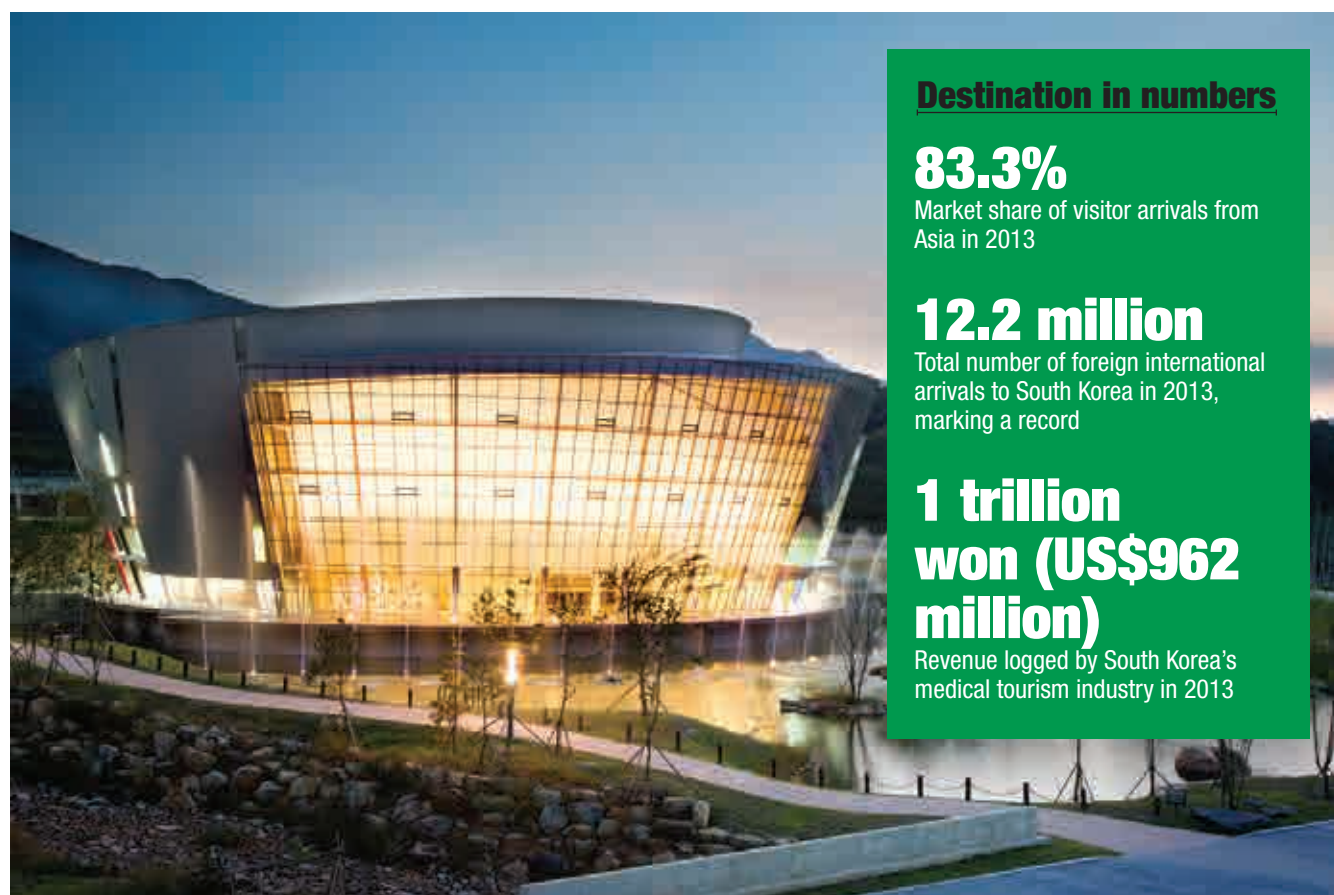
Some 95 per cent of funds for Taekwondowon came from the government and five per cent from the county, according to Won Gun Yeon, marketing team manager of Taekwondo Promotion Foundation, which oversees the centre.

"Foreign markets we are focusing on include the US, China, Germany and the UK. We anticipate foreign market share to reach seven to eight per cent in the first year of operation," said Won. "Marketing and fam trips have started since December 2013."

Korean DMCs have already spotted the potential of traditional martial arts in attracting visitors to the country. Sarah Lee, founder of Sarah Korea, said: "We bring taekwondo groups from Europe, Scandinavia and the US, with the US showing the strongest interest in this segment. We have launched several taekwondo programmes ranging between seven and 12 days."

Lee added that although South Korea is rising in popularity as a host destination for private school sports competitions in the region, "more marketing and promotion" of the country's potential in this area is still needed.

Other inbound tour operators, while welcoming South Korea's growing visibil-



### Destination in numbers

**83.3%**

Market share of visitor arrivals from Asia in 2013

**12.2 million**

Total number of foreign international arrivals to South Korea in 2013, marking a record

**1 trillion won (US\$962 million)**

Revenue logged by South Korea's medical tourism industry in 2013



Clockwise from above: Taekwondowon in Muju, One Mount's sports club and snow city in Goyang

ity in the sports niche, perceive such dedicated facilities as Taekwondowon too specialised for average visitors to the country.

ETourism managing director, Jacky Lee, said: "We will likely use the Taekwondowon for incentive tours, either for taekwondo interest groups or as a site for corporate incentives and teambuilding, but it is unlikely to become a leisure destination."

Instead, Lee suggests playing up the country's ample scenic spots through Korean pop culture to entice Asian leisure visitors. "Most Asian tourists like Korean

drama shooting sites like Nami Island and Mount Seorak in the east and Jeju Island. They usually spend two nights in Seoul and two nights in other cities," he said.

Destinations with such potential include Geoje Island in the south, where the western-style garden of Oedo-Botania was the filming location of Korean blockbuster drama *Winter Sonata*, and One Mount in Gyeonggi Province, where Psy's *Gentleman* music video was shot at the water theme park's indoor fitness complex, he opined.

Sharing similar sentiments, Jason Jae-

hee Park, inbound team manager of Han-aTour ITC, also pointed out the need to improve destination awareness of cultural attractions in South Korea, most of which are located outside Seoul.

"Foreigners generally know about the eastern parts of South Korea (like Busan), but the western parts such as Gongju, Jeonju and Gwangju, and the southern coastal area are still lesser known. These western areas were once home to many kingdoms, the food is really diverse and even the bibimbap is different," he commented.



# Destination South Korea

## Viewpoint

What is needed to promote South Korea tourism beyond Seoul?



**Jason Jaehee Park, team manager, inbound team, HanaTour ITC**

"We should develop more tour products, as most existing tour products focus on Seoul. It is harder for foreigners to move outside of Seoul on their own due to language barriers, but we already have bullet trains connecting bigger cities and smaller buses to connect smaller cities, so travel agencies should come up with creative itineraries. However, some places still need more infrastructure development."



**Jacky Lee, managing director, ETourism**

"Shoot a Korean drama in the west! KTO should promote West Korea more. We have itineraries in the western regions but they are not selling (well). South-east Asian tourists' itineraries are quite fixed; they usually visit just the standard destinations unlike Western tourists who will travel across the country. We have many popular areas beyond Seoul although such destinations often have a lack of hotels and they are not as accessible, so it can be more difficult for foreigners to travel around."

## How to sell

**DO** Take time out from the frenetic capital with a walk along **Cheonggyecheon Stream**, a 5.8km restored waterway in downtown Seoul which until 2005 was just a neglected creek hidden under an underpass. As major attractions like Insadong Street, Deoksugung Palace and Changdeokgung Palace are sited close to the stream, visitors can trace the waterway or opt for an organised walking tour to get deeper understanding of this successful urban renewal project.



**SEE** Take a walk through the Seoul of yore with a visit to **Bukchon Hanok Village**, a picturesque neighbourhood with the largest cluster of *hanok* – traditional Korean wooden homes – in the capital. Houses in this largely private residential area boast architectural features like small courtyards, decorative outer walls and dark tiled roofs, with numerous cafes, tea houses and galleries lodged in between the narrow alleys.



**EAT** Food and photography buffs should head to **Noryangjin Fisheries Wholesale Market**, an enormous and convivial marketplace in Seoul selling a staggering variety of seafood items, from clams to sea cucumbers and halibuts. After picking desired seafood at the lower level, patrons can then head upstairs to one of the restaurants, where, for a small fee, a chef will cook the day's catch into tantalising dishes. For daring palates, dining on *sannakji* (live octopus) will definitely be an experience.

**STAY** One of South Korea's fanciest address, **The Shilla Seoul** reopened last August following a makeover. Visitors will be enamoured by the property's ornate architecture blending contemporary and Shilla Dynasty-inspired styles, traditional Korean rooflines, and great views of the Namsan mountain from its hilltop location. Its facilities include a shopping arcade featuring designer brands, a health club with indoor and outdoor pools, and a Guerlain spa. For the quintessential Korean experience, book into the Korean suite that offers the option of sleeping on traditional thick blankets on the floor.

## NEWS IN A MINUTE

**1 HallyuWorld**  
To keep global interest in *hallyu* (Korean wave) growing, South Korea's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is currently building HallyuWorld, a concert arena dedicated to K-pop performances. Located in Goyang, Gyeonggi Province, in the north-western outskirts of Seoul, the stadium will boast an 18,000-seat main concert hall, a smaller 2,000-seat hall, a pop music museum, broadcasting studios and music education facilities. Due to complete by end-2016, HallyuWorld is an initiative by Gyeonggi Province and Korea Tourism Organization to develop the 990,000m<sup>2</sup> site as a K-pop tourism hub with shopping facilities, cultur-

al institutions and accommodation. So far, the 377-room MVL Hotel Kintex and One Mount, a 160,000m<sup>2</sup> water theme park, have been completed.

**2 New regional links for Seoul**  
HK Express became the latest carrier to launch daily flights between Hong Kong and Seoul Incheon on March 30 and has since raised frequency on to twice-daily from April 11. Earlier this year, budget carrier Eastar Jet started daily flights between Siem Reap and Seoul Incheon, adding to existing services offered by Korean Air and Asiana Airlines on the same route. Meanwhile, Asiana Airlines is considering plans to launch a new

Seoul-based LCC that will fly from both Gimpo and Incheon international airports. If the launch is successful, it will become the second LCC owned by Asiana – it owns a majority stake in Air Busan – and the country's sixth budget carrier.

**3 Dongdaemun Design Plaza**  
The Dongdaemun Design Plaza, which was recently inaugurated in March, is designed to become a key cultural hub and tourist landmark in Seoul. The structure boasts a futuristic, asymmetrical facade made of aluminum panels of varying sizes and curvatures – a design that gives a nod to architect Zaha Hadid's signature curvaceous creations. With three storeys below ground and four storeys above, the 85,000m<sup>2</sup> complex also features a variety of public spaces, including a design museum, library, banquet hall, seminar rooms and a park – offering a welcomed lush oasis in the bustling district.

**4 JW Marriott Dongdaemun Square Seoul**  
Opening its doors in February, the 170-room JW Marriott Dongdaemun Square Seoul marks the second JW Marriott in the Korean capital and the first hotel in the city to receive LEED Gold Certification. The property boasts unobstructed views of the historic Dongdaemun – South Korea's national treasure – from its location in the heart of Seoul's fashion district and adjacent to the subway station and key attractions. There is a dedicated executive lounge with an open balcony serving the executive floor rooms, plus extensive health facilities including an indoor 25m lap pool, a fitness centre and spa. On the dining front, BLT Steak of the acclaimed New York steakhouse is a highlight, in addition to Tavolo 24, an all-day dining restaurant; The Lounge, specialising in artisan chocolates and tea; Seoul Baking Company, which serves cakes and pastries from its open kitchen; and the rooftop Griffin Bar.





## Poll on ttgasia.com

Which niche segment should be promoted in South Korea to attract more tourists?

Sports 93%

Hallyu (pop culture) 4%

Food and drinks 1%

Nature and scenery 2%

Total number of responses: 380



## MY WAY

**Where do you go during your free time?**

I love speed racing. The Formula 1 race was held last year in South Korea, and I look forward to attending another if it returns. I also take my son to cinemas and eat popcorn to have our boys' time together when my wife is not around. Afterwards we head to the bookshop and read.

**Where's the best place to try your favourite food in Seoul?**

I am a meat lover but Korean barbeque with many side dishes amazes me every time. Bulgogi, galbi, pork and Hanwoo beef are just great to have on a sizzling pan. There's a barbeque restaurant near our hotel where all our associates love to go, another near Hongik University (Hongdae) and one that our team recently discovered near Itaewon.

**Are there must-see destinations that visitors often miss?**

I always recommend friends to visit Hongdae, which has a young vibe, flea markets on Saturdays, and bars and local restaurants. The area is known for art shows as well.

For nightlife and dining, Itaewon cannot be missed – international cuisines, clubs and bars are all there. Garosugil is also great to visit. The district itself is famous for being expensive, but the street is filled with great restaurants, little cafes and designer's boutique shops.

**Nicholas Tse**

General manager

JW Marriott Dongdaemun Square Seoul

Of course in Dongdaemun, we have The Griffin Bar right at the top of our hotel which offers full views of East Gate, Cheonggyecheon and Dongdaemun Design Plaza, the newest exhibition centre.

**What is it about Seoul that inspires you most?**

The four seasons, as I spent the majority of my career in South-east Asia. Despite Seoul being the capital city, I still see a blend of nature and modernism – there are numerous mountains in and around the city as well as quiet areas, but at the same time it is a bustling economic city.

**What are the top souvenirs to bag home from Seoul?**

Seaweed – just-cooked hot rice and seaweed is a perfect combination, and I can have them every day! South Korea is also known for reasonably priced cosmetics and they work well. My friends send me a long list of items to purchase whenever I travel back to Hong Kong. I think snail cream is hot now, plus hand and foot masks. I am also a fan of some of the K-pop groups and you can find all sorts of celebrity merchandise. Lastly, the traditional dress, *hanbok*, is very unique and colours are beautiful. Summer and winter designs are available, and I wear them on special occasions. If a full set is too pricey, there are many *hanbok*-inspired souvenirs.



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TOURISM FEDERATION



# MEMORIES OF IT&CM CHINA 2014

15-17 April 2014  
Shanghai, China



Meritus Hotels & Resorts Singapore's Paul Stocker, Carlson Wagonlit Travel Singapore's Serene Tan and Meritus Hotels & Resorts China's Wendy Wu



Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)'s Hajime Nakasugi, CCA Transport Australia's Sharon Neave, Smart Aussie Ideas Australia's Janet Price and JNTO's Shinji Murakami



China Youth Travel Service Dalian's Renee Deng and Chui Hao Tong



Yulong International Hotel China's Wang Ya Cun and Wei Na



The Alliance of China Conference Hotels China's Wu Shao Yuan and MICE Committee of China Association of Travel Services' Te Zhang



CITS Fujian's Tiger Xu and Schools World Cups France's Richard Jordan



TTG Events Singapore's Jo-Ann Siregar and Eventworld UK's Michael Packford



Helms Briscoe Turkey's Christian Selchau and Sol D'or Travel Agency Spain's Teresa Sans

## Investing In Our Future Leaders



The Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center, venue of IT&CM China 2014, was all abuzz with the energy of 63 students from 10 educational establishments in China who attended the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum on 16th April 2014. The full-day event gave students opportunities to tap the brains of MICE industry experts such as IMEX Group's Sarah Skavron, ICCA's Noor Ahmad Hamid, First Incentive Travel's Joost de Meyer and Greenview's Eric Ricaurte.



# SNAPSHOTS

## TTG CHINA TRAVEL AWARDS 2014

17th April 2014

InterContinental Shanghai Puxi  
Shanghai, China

Held in Shanghai, TTG China Travel Awards 2014, for the 7th consecutive year, recognised the exemplary achievements of 60 organisations in the Greater China travel industry. Winners and our guests were brought together for a night of celebrations with an amazing spread by venue host, InterContinental Shanghai Puxi and exciting performances by local and international artists.



Our signature 24K gold-plated Hermes trophies, all ready to head home with the winners



The Emcee for the night, Ms Maria Chen



Performances by international duo, Alex and Bay



Performance by local artiste, Ms Fu Xiao Li



Our guests enjoying the 4 course spread by InterContinental Shanghai Puxi



Mr Darren Ng, Managing Director of TTG Asia Media and Ms Kwan Sumin, Area Director, Eastern China of Singapore Tourism Board, Winner of Best NTO in China



Mr Darren Ng, Managing Director of TTG Asia Media and Mr Terrace Wang, Vice President, Sales & Distribution Marketing, Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, Winner of Best Theme Attraction in China



Mr Michael Chow, Group Publisher of TTG Travel Trade Publishing and Ms Christina Cheng, General Manager of Harbour Plaza 8 Degrees, Winner of Best Mid-range Hotel in Hong Kong

For more photos and the list of TTG China Travel Awards 2014 Winners, please visit [www.ttgchina.com/ttg-awards](http://www.ttgchina.com/ttg-awards)



# Destination Philippines

Refreshed products are breathing new life into Cebu city tours



## CEBU MAKES A CO

**H**alf a year after the Bohol earthquake and super typhoon Haiyan, Cebu's travel trade is refining existing programmes and turning out new ones to reattract visitors, putting a greater emphasis on cultural products.

The general consensus is that the city needs more activities to widen the region's appeal beyond beaches and water sports, which works for captive markets like Japan, South Korea and overseas Filipinos.

According to Tourism Region 7 (Central Visayas) director Rowena Montecillo, the Department of Tourism has decided to focus on enhancing two community-based tourism products: the Boljoon-Oslob-Santander-Samboan town cluster south of Cebu, combining sites such as heritage churches in Boljoon with the white sand beaches in the four towns; and the town of Malabuyoc, also in the south, as an ecotourism and wellness destination that has begun to attract Japanese and European tourists.

"The idea is for visitors to experience (Malabuyoc's) hot springs and waterfalls; we're already training therapists for that," Montecillo said.

In the city, the hundred-year-old Carbon Market, Cebu's oldest farmer's market, is getting a spruce-up and enhancing security for visitors, while new horse-drawn tartanilla cart rides for up to 10 people are in the works, together

with redesigned half-day and whole-day tours of churches and religious shrines, said Alice Queblatin, managing director at Southwind Travel & Tours, and Philippine Tourism Congress' vice president for travel and tours for the Visayas.

North of Cebu, a new Hillyland Adventure programme leading up to the towns of Busay and Balamban would include some agro-tourism elements – flower farm and mango/guava orchard visits, birdwatching in the secondary forests of Tabunan, and ziplining adventures in Balamban, Queblatin said, activities which lend themselves to "wellness", meaning spa visits, organic meals and other activities.

Additionally, tour operators are tweaking a Southern Countryside programme showcasing the heritage towns of Carcar, Argao, Talisay, Sibonga, and Simala, which are rich in Spanish heritage homes and churches.

Queblatin suggested that this could be combined with soft adventure activities in Sumilon Island, like kayaking, trekking, and snorkelling, and whale watching in nearby Oslob "instead of pushing them aside", pointing out that ecotourism could work together with cultural and heritage to draw more attention.

She highlighted that the most efficiently and successfully run of Cebu's ecotours, the Olango Island bird sanctuary tour, will be refined further to emphasise cultural interaction with the neighbouring communities, while the trade continues to support the Bojo river tour in Aloguinsan.

She opined that Cebu should continue leveraging its identity as the "historical

site of the oldest city in the Philippines" and not let go of its brand positioning as a major cultural, historical and heritage site. "Cebu's new tour programmes should still promote ecotours, but I'd still go for cultural heritage tours, which we're really enhancing."

Meanwhile, after Haiyan, the Philippines has exerted extra effort to woo back South Korean visitors, Cebu's top market, noted Gwen Batoon, head of the North Asia Team for the Philippines Tourism Promotions Board "because South Koreans are very sensitive to natural disasters".

Margaret Villarica, president of the Cebu Association of Tour Operators, said: "When the earthquake happened, followed by the typhoon, it was perceived that the whole Philippines was affected... Cebu's city centre was not really affected; the northern parts of Cebu (including Bogu and Medellin) were."

In fact, according to Montecillo, disaster-stricken Bantayan and Malapascua – havens for diving and whale shark watching during summer and winter, and a further two to three hours from Cebu – are gradually restoring power facilities and reconstructing damaged resorts.

Attesting to Cebu's recovery, Matt Poonin, sales and marketing manager for inbound and MICE at Travelite Travel & Tours Cebu, noted that Japan, China, and South Korea charters have resumed regular trips.

"There was a decrease in the number of clients I handled, but the situation is recovering, although I have yet to get new bookings from Russia," he said.

### How to sell

**DO** Drive northward into the hills of Cebu towards **Balamban**. Come in hiking gear and waterproof shoes to rappel, cave or zipline, trek and swim at the waterfalls, then have lunch at restaurant West 35, or the popular Adventure Cafe, about 33km along the Cebu Transcentral Highway, or 40 minutes from JY Square Mall and Marco Polo Plaza Cebu Hotel.





Put memories of disaster-stricken Cebu in the past and start paying attention to its cultural and ecotourism draws, reports **Marianne Carandang**

### Destination in numbers

## 9.6%

Growth in international tourist arrivals in 2013 for the Philippines, bringing the total to 4.7 million visitors

## 1.2 million

Total number of international arrivals in 2013 for Cebu, or 38.5 per cent of all tourist arrivals to the Philippines

## 64,945

Total number of scheduled flights handled by Mactan Cebu International Airport in 2013, of which only 17 per cent or 10,991 were international flights

### Viewpoint

Moving forward from last year's earthquake and typhoon, does Cebu have stronger appeal as a cultural or ecotourism destination?



**Ricky Tio**  
general manager,  
**Cebu Holiday  
Tours & Travel**

"As an ecotourism destination. We have star community-based

tourism development products such as the Aloguinsan River Eco-Tour, which offers the chance to help the fishing communities of the area."



**Hans Hauri**  
general manager,  
**Marco Polo Plaza  
Hotel Cebu**

"Cebu has a high level of awareness of the importance of (both) culture and environment, with

voluntourism projects such as Bantayan Back to Sea, which gives tourists the opportunity to build fishing boats, and grassroots travel with the Bojo river in Aloguinsan."

## TRIED & TESTED

### The Henry



Marianne Carandang is charmed by the generous space and personalised service offered by this property boasting a combination of design styles.

design aesthetic also enlivens the hotel's meeting rooms and guestrooms.

There is a salon and a small fashion boutique shop on the ground floor, while the far end of the lobby leads to a swimming pool. On the third floor is a small reading room with magazines and daily newspapers, while the second floor has two meeting rooms, Space 40 and Space 150.

**F&B** Breakfast and full restaurant meals are offered at Rica's, located on the ground floor. The restaurant is airy and provides good spacing between tables, allowing for privacy.

Breakfast is admittedly not a huge selection, but is filling and offers good coffee, while the a la carte menu offers tasty Filipino and Spanish dishes. The Scrapyard Lounge Bar on the second floor, next to the meeting rooms, plays upbeat music and is a popular nightspot in Cebu.

**SERVICE** The effort to impress you with their personalised service is evident from the moment I checked in – they greeted me by my name.

**VERDICT** The Henry has earned its reputation as a quirky, unique, city boutique hotel in Cebu.

**Name** The Henry

**No. of rooms** 38

**Rates** From US\$73 for the Big Room (36m²), hotel tax and service charge included

**Contact details** Tel: (63-32) 520-8877

Email: reservations@thehenryhotel.com

Website: www.thehenryhotel.com

# COMEBACK

**SEE** One of Cebu's most distinctive offerings is its plethora of dried fish and seafood at **Tabo-an Market** at Pahina Central, displayed in buckets and sold by weight. The market also sells Cebu-style pork *longganisa* sausages (below), as well as prepackaged dried fruit, including Cebu's famed dried mangoes. Don't forget to haggle.



**EAT** Though self-described as an Italian trattoria, chic **Tavolata** offers ultra-modern yet cosy surroundings. Visitors come for the executive lunch, which includes soup and a hearty bowl of pasta; consider trying the oxtail pappardelle and their cold cuts and cheese platters, as well as their grilled lamb chops *scottadito* and Angus rib-eye steaks.



### STAY **Mövenpick Hotel Mactan Island Cebu**

underwent an extensive US\$11.3 million facelift in 2013, offering bright new rooms in white, crystalline blues and green. Have sunset cocktails and listen to lounge music at the charming outdoor bar Ibiza Beach Club, which also has an enclosed tapas and wine bar with a view of the ocean. If staying indoors is your fancy, riffle through the extensive menu of cognacs and single malt whiskeys offered at The Forum.



**Poll on ttgasia.com**

Has traveller confidence  
returned since the disasters  
that hit Philippines last year?

Yes **97%**  
No **3%**

Total number of responses: **511**

## NEWS IN A MINUTE

### 1 See drag queens at Resorts World Manila

Resorts World Manila will be staging its premiere production of *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* from May 9 to July 13 at its Newport Performing Arts Theatre. This award-winning musical kicked off in Sydney in 2006 and opened on Broadway in 2011 to critical acclaim.

The production features a stellar cast of Philippine performers including Leo Tavarro Valdez, Jon Santos, Red Concepcion and Michael Williams in lead roles; and Bituin Escalante, Lani Ligot, Timmy Canlas, Pinky Marquez, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo in supporting roles.

Adapted from the 1994 film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, the musical follows the story of two drag queens and a transsexual who go on a cross-country trip onboard a “budget Barbie camper” named Priscilla for a cabaret gig in a resort town in the remote Australian desert.

### 2 Discover San Felipe on the Javalava Surfapalooza: Zambales Surf Tour

Surf lovers in search of new surf



spots would take to the tour, which was rolled out in April and has added two more weekend dates: June 14-15 and August 9-10.

The adventure will take surfers to Liwliwa Beach in the town of San Felipe in Zambales, which is about an hour north of Subic Bay. The waves in this area are good for beginners, who will receive an on-the-beach lesson and hit the water for surf action almost immediately.

San Felipe is an under-the-radar, relatively undiscovered destination,

so the area is still devoid of upscale accommodation. The overnight tour programme includes board and lodging in spartan but comfortable rooms, lunch and dinner, board rental, and surfing instruction, all for P3,100 (US\$70). Email [travel@gojavalava.com](mailto:travel@gojavalava.com) or visit <https://www.facebook.com/javalavamaniila>

### 3 Marco Polo Plaza Cebu sports new deluxe rooms

Marco Polo Plaza Cebu has completed full renovation of its 228 de-



luxe rooms this quarter. There are improvements to room furniture, bathrooms and lighting. The rooms on two floors have a bathtub in the bathroom. The investment in renovation cost P100 million (US\$2.2 million) and was implemented over the course of one year.

The hotel's makeover follows the renovations completed in 2013 for Marco Polo Davao, and this month's opening of Marco Polo Ortigas, Manila in Ortigas Commercial Business District.

## MY WAY

### What are your hobbies?

I run. I'm a marathon runner and I run around the city, particularly in the Mandaue City area, usually three to four times a week. I will usually do my 5-10km run starting near the IT Park, near Waterfront Hotel in Lahug, going up to the Ayala area. After that I'll usually have coffee at Starbucks, Pancake House restaurant at Oakridge (Business Park) or make a stop at Brioche, a new coffee shop along Escario Street.

### What are some good spots to go shopping for gifts?

My office is at SM City Cebu, so I'd recommend anywhere between SM and Ayala Center. Rustan's Department Store, which is expanding with the opening of a new wing, is a good choice. If not, SM's department store and the Kultura Filipino concept store, for souvenirs.

Cebu's furniture design outlets are somewhat out of the way from the city, but if you have time, you should try visiting. The Carbon Market also has lots of interesting local items, like capiz shell decor and dining ware, which you can use for parties.

**Margaret Villarica**  
President and general manager  
Destination Specialists Cebu

### What are some of your favourite restaurants in Cebu? Any particular delicacy to recommend?

For Filipino food, I'd say Cafe Laguna; for good dessert, Oh Georg! (Ayala Center). I also recommend going to Busay town and trying out Delice Recipes (open from 14.00 to midnight), which overlooks the city. When in Cebu, try our *lechon* (roasted pig cooked on a spit), which is so good you don't need any sauce to go with it. There are several *lechon* shops to choose from, but every time people ask me, I try to get them to taste Cang's Lechon.

### When you go out of town for a day trip, where is your ideal getaway?

I really like going to the mountains up in Busay. It's a very scenic drive from Cebu City, not too far – less than an hour – and we get to see a lot of flower farms along the way. I usually visit a friend who has a house located in the middle of a lotus pond.





# Social

From the newest executive movements to recent trade celebrations and major upcoming events, we round up the latest happenings to keep you plugged in

## APPOINTMENTS



**Azizan Noordin**

### **AZIZAN NOORDIN**

**THEN** Deputy director general for planning at Tourism Malaysia (TM).

**NOW** Heads the promotion portfolio consisting of advertising, South-east Asia, North and East Asia, America/Europe/Oceania, South Asia/West Africa/Africa, and communication and publicity.

### **CHONG YOKE HAR**

**THEN** Former deputy director general (promotion) for TM.

**NOW** Handles the planning portfolio. This includes domestic promotions, research, information technology, finance, industry development and promotion support.

### **ROBIN YAP**

**THEN** Non-executive chairman at The Travel Corporation (TTC), having semi-retired for the last eight months due to health reasons.

**NOW** TTC now welcomes him back as president for Asia again.

### **NICK LIM**

**THEN** TTC's president for Asia, while also being regional director Asia of Trafalgar.

**NOW** Expanded role as president for Trafalgar



**Robin Yap**



**Nick Lim**



**Riaz Mahmood**

gar Asia and president for TTC India.

### **RIAZ MAHMOOD**

**THEN** General manager of the Sheraton Dammam Hotel and Towers, Saudi Arabia.

**NOW** General manager of Orchard Hotel Singapore under Millennium and Copthorne International.

### **SUPHARERK SOONRANGURA**

**THEN** Managing director of NS Travel & Tours Thailand.

**NOW** Succeeds Suthipong Phuenphiphop as president of the Thai Travel Agents Association, while continuing to head the travel agency.

### **CORRECTION**

In our April 25 issue, we reported that Christopher Bohwongprasert has been appointed as vice-chairman of Artyzen Hospitality Group. This is incorrect. He has been appointed as director of sales & marketing for Hansar Hotels & Resorts, responsible for the Bangkok and Pranburi properties, as well as Hansar Cha-Am slated to open later this year. We are sorry for any inconvenience caused.

## TRADE CALENDAR *SEE YOU AT...*



### **GLOBAL 2014 & 11<sup>th</sup> ATF**

May 18-20, Hong Kong

The two-in-one Global Tourism & Hospitality Conference and Asia Tourism Forum will be held at Hotel Icon, and include a special panel session on education and training.



### **IMEX 2014**

May 20-22, Frankfurt

The MICE show will offer over 150 free educational programmes for industry buyers and suppliers, and will be delivered across eight industry-specific tracks. New educational venues on the show floor include a Tech Hub, Meeting Design Hub and Creativity Pod.



### **IHIC 2014**

June 6, Bali

The second annual Indonesia Hotel Investment Conference gathers industry speakers, moderators and panelists to address the opportunities and challenges facing the hotel industry in Indonesia and the region in the present economic climate.



### **BALI & BEYOND TRAVEL FAIR**

June 10-14, Bali

Meant to promote travel around Indonesia with Bali as a gateway, the inaugural fair will allow local tourism players to meet about 500 global buyers and over 1,500 trade visitors in Nusa Dua and Kuta.

## GALLERY *WTTC GLOBAL SUMMIT 2014*



Renaissance Sanya Resort & Spa, the venue host of the summit



VisitBritain's Christopher Rodrigues and Hilton Worldwide's Christopher Nasetta with BBC Hardtalk's Stephen Sackur



LANITH's Maeve O'Brien and Peter Semone receive the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow's People Award



WTTC's David Scowsill, Comunidad de Madrid's Joaquin Castillo, Hainan's assistant governor Lu Zhiyuan and WTTC's Michael Frenzel



PATA's Martin Craigs on a panel with Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces' Raymond Bickson



Marriott International's Kathleen Matthews and former NBA player Yao Ming



China's vice premier Wang Yang



# Connect

ICYMI: Tune in to what's been going on at [www.ttgasia.com](http://www.ttgasia.com) and in cyberspace. Plus, we end off on a light-hearted note

## HEADLINES



### VIDEO JOB PORTAL FOR RETAIL & HOSPITALITY LAUNCHES IN ASIA

New recruitment website JobStar allows employers in the retail and hospitality sector to assess an applicant's language proficiency, communication skills and personality without having to arrange for a face-to-face interview. Companies pay US\$50 to post a vacancy on-line. Applicants apply to the position by hitting record, providing their answers and uploading the video to the site.

### ACCOR ROLLS OUT PERSONALISED WELCOME SOLUTION FOR ONLINE CHECK-IN

To be introduced globally, the four steps of the solution comprise: guests check-in two days ahead; receive a welcome message and key information on transport services, etc by SMS on arrival day; collect room key immediately upon arrival; check out by returning the key and wait for email invoice after.

### MAPLETREE ENTERS SERVICED APARTMENTS FRAY WITH NEW OAKWOOD JV

Oakwood Worldwide and Mapletree Group Singapore to launch more than 100 Oakwood properties globally within the next five years. Mapletree will acquire and develop serviced apartments in markets outside of North America, while Oakwood will do the same for properties within North America.

## WHO'S SAYING WHAT

### Tweets

#### HERE'S THE BUZZ AT THIS YEAR'S ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET IN DUBAI:

**@Helen\_Spearman**  
Today I'm mostly emotionally preparing myself for the incoming landslide of #ATMDubai press releases.

**@FraserSuitesDXB**  
Come & meet the @FraserApartment team @ATMDubai #Dubai. Our stand is HC5570 #ATM2014 #ATMDubai #ATM #exhibition #UAE

**@ArabiTravel**  
Some of our key focuses during this #ATMDubai week: #Cyprus #Taiwan and #Malaysia  
**@smchamb** @ArabiTravel would love to talk about Malaysia with you at #ATMDubaiMaldives in 2007  
**@ArabiTravel** @smchamb Sounds great. Conrad stand is definitely on our 'to visit list'

**TWITTER.COM/TTG\_ASIA**  
**FACEBOOK.COM/TTGASIA**  
**INSTAGRAM.COM/TTGASIA**

### Soundbites



Thai tourism is not the elephant in the room, but more like a gorilla, unpredictable, volatile but also loveable.

**Bill Barnett**, managing director, C9 Hotelworks

### Instagram



Beach boys and girls at the Sanya Reception Dinner for #WTTTC Global Summit attendees last night at the beachfront lawn of DoubleTree Resort by Hilton. Surf's up!

## TRAVEL PURSUITS

Compiled by The Fox

### TRAVEL INDUSTRY VERSUS REAL WORLD

Industry phrase	Real-world meaning
Our agency is merging into ABC Travel	ABC Travel is buying us out
ABC Airways is joining our alliance next month	We have found an airline not already in an alliance
We have a 25% discount until end-month	Business is bad
Our summer discount has been extended	Business is bad
Be first to board with Priority Boarding	You board with families with children, pregnant women, old people, friends of staff and all others who have bought Priority Boarding

### QUIZ

1. Name the 'parent' airlines of Dragonair, SilkAir, THAI Smile?
2. Brands of the Starwood hotel group include Aloft, Element, Four Points, The Luxury Collection and St Regis. What are the four other brand names?
3. The ATF trade show event is organised by PATA. True or false?
4. Two airlines owned by the UK-based IAG (International Consolidated Airlines Group) are Iberia and Vueling. Which is the third?
5. What is the current name of the hotel group that was Mandarin Singapore Hotels, SMI Hotels & Resorts and others?

(1) Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways International. (2) Le Meridien, Sheraton, Westin. Nine in all. Only Element has no property in Asia Pacific. (3) False. The TRAVEX component of ATF was organised by ASEAN Tourism Association this year. PATA has its own trade show event. PATA Travel Mart. (4) British Airways (BA), IAG was formed by BA and Iberia in 2011. Spain-based Vueling was bought in 2013. (5) Meritus Hotels & Resorts.



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**Travel Hall of Fame** Since 2002, TTG Asia Media has honoured luminaries that have won the prestigious TTG Travel Award for at least 10 consecutive times for the same award title in the Travel Hall of Fame.

At present, these exceptional organisations and their years of induction are:

- Singapore Airlines (2002)
- Singapore Changi Airport (2002)
- Hertz Asia Pacific (2005)
- Royal Cliff Hotels Group (2006)
- Star Cruises (2008)
- Abacus International (2009)
- SilkAir (2010)
- Lotte Tour (2011)
- Hong Kong International Airport (2013)
- Raffles Hotel Singapore (2013)

TTG Asia Media is pleased to announce that it is setting up a virtual TTG Travel Hall of Fame, which will enable us to showcase the accolades, artefacts and memorabilia of the region's most exceptional travel organisations in a far more effective way and to a global audience.





TTG TRAVEL AWARDS 2014



**Cast Your Vote Now!**

# The Power of Your Choice Decides The Industry's Best!

The Asia-Pacific travel trade's most anticipated awards, TTG Travel Awards is back for its 25th installment to celebrate the amazing feats of organisations and individuals who have rocketed the industry to greater heights!

Help your favourite travel suppliers and travel agencies bring home one of these 68 acclaimed titles and the coveted 24K gold plated Hermes Trophy!

[www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards](http://www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards)

**Closing Date: 7 July 2014**



An event by:



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Organised by:



Supported by:





Award Categories

1. Travel Agency Awards
- Winners in this category are decided by votes from industry suppliers.
- Best Travel Agency

– Australia

• Best Travel Agency

– China

• Best Travel Agency

– Chinese Taipei

• Best Travel Agency

– Hong Kong

• Best Travel Agency

– India

• Best Travel Agency

– Indochina (Cambodia, Laos)

• Best Travel Agency

– Indonesia

• Best Travel Agency

– Japan

• Best Travel Agency

– Malaysia

• Best Travel Agency

– Singapore

• Best Travel Agency

– South Korea

• Best Travel Agency

– Thailand

• Best Travel Agency

– The Philippines

• Best Travel Agency

– Vietnam

• Best Corporate Travel Agency

• Best Online Travel Agency
2. Travel Supplier Awards
- Winners in this category are decided by votes from travel consultants and experts.

Airline Awards

- Best North American Airline

• Best European Airline

• Best Middle Eastern Airline

• Best South-east Asian Airline

• Best North Asian Airline

• Best China Airline

• Best Pacific Airline

• Best Regional Airline

• Best Asian Low-Cost Carrier

Hotels, Resorts, Serviced Residences & Spa Awards

HOTEL Chains

- Best Global Hotel Chain

• Best Regional Hotel Chain

• Best Local Hotel Chain

• Best Hotel Representation Company

• Best Luxury Hotel Brand

• Best Mid-range Hotel Brand

• Best Budget Hotel Brand

HOTELS – Individual Property

- Best Luxury Hotel

• Best Mid-range Hotel

• Best Budget Hotel

• Best Independent Hotel

• Best Boutique Hotel

• Best City Hotel

– Bangkok

• Best City Hotel

– Delhi

• Best City Hotel

– Hanoi/Ho Chi Minh City

• Best City Hotel

– Jakarta

• Best City Hotel

– Hong Kong

• Best City Hotel

– Kuala Lumpur

• Best City Hotel

– Macau

• Best City Hotel

– Manila

• Best City Hotel

– Seoul

• Best City Hotel

– Singapore

• Best City Hotel

– Taipei

• Best City Hotel

– Tokyo

• Best New City Hotel

• Best Airport Hotel

RESORTS – Individual Property

- Best Beach Resort

• Best Resort Hotel (Non-Beach)

• Best New Beach Resort

• Best Integrated Resort

SERVICED RESIDENCES

- Best Serviced Residence Operator

SPAS

- Best Spa Operator

BT-MICE Awards

- Best Airline – Business Class

• Best Business Hotel

• Best Meetings & Conventions Hotel

• Best BT-MICE City

• Best Convention & Exhibition Centre

• Best Convention & Exhibition Bureau

Travel Services Awards

- Best Airport

• Best GDS

• Best Cruise Operator

• Best NTO

• Best Theme Attraction

3. Outstanding Achievement Awards
- The winners in this category are decided by the TTG Asia team.
- Travel Personality of the Year

• Destination of the Year

• Most Entrepreneurial Travel Company

• Best Marketing & Development Effort

4. Travel Hall of Fame
- The Travel Hall of Fame honours organisations that have won at least 10 consecutive times at previous editions of the TTG Travel Awards. These special award winners will be recognised at every TTG annual awards presentation ceremony. Votes for them will not be counted.

Inducted Travel Hall of Fame honouaries are:

- Singapore Changi Airport (2002)

• Singapore Airlines (2002)

• Hertz Asia-Pacific (2005)

• Royal Cliff Hotels Group (2006)

• Star Cruises (2008)

• Abacus International (2009)

• Silkair (2010)

• Lotte Tour (2011)

• Hong Kong International Airport (2013)

• Raffles Hotel Singapore (2013)

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

For Travel Agency and Travel Supplier Awards

1. Please use the correct voting form.

Voting Form A: Travel Agency Awards

For voting by hoteliers, airline staff, car rental companies, cruise operators, national tourism organisations, GDS companies and all other travel professionals (except travel consultants, tour operators and destination management companies).

Voting Form B: Travel Supplier Awards

For voting by travel consultants, tour operators and destination management companies only.

Online Voting Forms

You can opt to vote using our online form [www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards](http://www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards) instead.

2. Voting Criteria

Please refer to the voting criteria for each category and title to ensure that all judging is done on an equal basis.

3. Voting Rules

- i.

Only one voting entry per person is allowed – using the voting form or online voting.
- ii.

All votes are confidential.
- iii.

Voting forms are published in TTG Travel Trade Publishing print titles and are available online at [www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards](http://www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards)

- iv.

No responsibility will be accepted by the organisers for voting forms lost, delayed or damaged in the post.
- v.

There are no pre-nominated contenders for any voting awards.
- vi.

The results for TTG Travel Awards 2014 are final and no correspondence will be entertained.
- vii.

Voting forms will be tabulated and evaluated by an independent auditor in Singapore.
- viii.

The closing date is 7 July 2014.

4. Voting Form Submission

Completed voting forms are to be returned to:

SINGAPORE

**Ms Lina Tan** (TTG Travel Awards 2014)  
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VOTING FORM A: TRAVEL AGENCY AWARDS

For voting by • Hoteliers • Airlines • Car rental companies • Cruise operators • National Tourism Organisations • GDS companies • All other travel professionals (except travel consultants, tour operators and destination management companies)

VOTE ONLINE AT  
[www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards](http://www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards)

Criteria

Best Travel Agency in its respective category in terms of:

- Professionalism and excellence in staff.

• Best value-added services to client.

• Best use of computer technology applications to help improve efficiency and effectiveness in services provided to client.

1.

Best Travel Agency

– Australia
2.

Best Travel Agency

– China
3.

Best Travel Agency

– Chinese Taipei
4.

Best Travel Agency

– Hong Kong
5.

Best Travel Agency

– India
6.

Best Travel Agency

– Indochina (Cambodia, Laos)
7.

Best Travel Agency

– Indonesia
8.

Best Travel Agency

– Japan
9.

Best Travel Agency

– Malaysia
10.

Best Travel Agency

– Singapore
11.

Best Travel Agency

– South Korea
12.

Best Travel Agency

– Thailand
13.

Best Travel Agency

– The Philippines
14.

Best Travel Agency

– Vietnam

15.

Best Corporate Travel Agency

Best travel agency specialising in serving the needs of corporate travellers.

16.

Best Online Travel Agency

Best online-based travel agency offering the most user-friendly and effective interface to meet client needs. This online travel agency must also boast the best sales and marketing network in terms of service innovation.

VOTER INFORMATION

Name:		Passport no.:	
Job title:		Company:	
Address:			
Country:			
Telephone no.:		Fax no.:	
Email:		Signature:	

Please refer to the next page for  
VOTING FORM B:  
TRAVEL SUPPLIER AWARDS

VOTING CLOSES  
7 JULY 2014



# VOTING FORM B: TRAVEL SUPPLIER AWARDS

For voting by • Travel Consultants • Tour Operators • Destination Management Companies

## Airline Awards

- Criteria**  
Best airline in its respective category in terms of:
- Providing the best service, network and schedules.
  - Most agent-friendly in terms of reservations, confirmations and commission payments.
  - Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas, incentive programmes and servicing.
17. Best **North American** Airline  
Best airline based in North America operating Asia-Pacific routes.
18. Best **European** Airline  
Best airline based in Europe operating Asia-Pacific routes.
19. Best **Middle Eastern** Airline  
Best airline based in Middle East operating Asia-Pacific routes.
20. Best **South-east Asian** Airline  
Best airline based in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand or Vietnam operating Asia-Pacific routes.
21. Best **North Asian** Airline  
Best airline based in South Korea, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Macau or Hong Kong operating Asia-Pacific routes.
22. Best **China** Airline  
Best airline based in China operating Asia-Pacific routes.
23. Best **Pacific** Airline  
Best airline based in the Pacific operating Asia-Pacific routes.
24. Best **Regional** Airline  
Best airline based regionally operating Asia-Pacific routes.
25. Best **Asian Low-cost Carrier**  
Best airline based in Asia-Pacific that operates on a low-cost strategy.

## Hotels, Resorts, Serviced Residences & Spa Awards

- Criteria**  
Best Hotel Chain in its respective category in terms of:
- Most consistent in products and services.
  - Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas, incentive programmes and servicing.
- Best Hotel/Resort/Serviced Residence/Spa in its respective category in terms of:
- Best services and facilities.
  - Best range of value-added benefits.
  - Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.
- HOTEL CHAINS**
26. Best **Global** Hotel Chain  
Best hotel chain operating a network of properties globally.
27. Best **Regional** Hotel Chain  
Best hotel chain operating a network of properties in the region.
28. Best **Local** Hotel Chain  
Best hotel chain operating a network of properties within any one Asia-Pacific country.
29. Best Hotel **Representation Company**  
Best company providing the most agent-friendly products and services and showing the best marketing effort in generating sales for member hotels via agents.
30. Best **Luxury** Hotel Brand  
Best hotel chain operating a network of luxurious properties within any one Asia-Pacific country.
31. Best **Mid-range** Hotel Brand  
Best hotel chain operating a network of mid-range properties within any one Asia-Pacific country.
32. Best **Budget** Hotel Brand  
Best hotel chain operating a network of economical properties within any one Asia-Pacific country.

- HOTELS – Individual Property**
33. Best **Luxury** Hotel  
Best hotel catering to the upmarket traveller. This hotel must also boast the best visual appeal and ambience reflecting upmarket status.
34. Best **Mid-range** Hotel  
Best mid-range hotel catering to the traveller who seeks three- to four-star quality and comfort.
35. Best **Budget** Hotel  
Best hotel catering to the budget traveller.
36. Best **Independent** Hotel  
Best non-chain (ie not part of a network of properties) hotel.
37. Best **Boutique** Hotel  
Best small, fashionable and unique hotel.
38. Best **City** Hotel – **Bangkok**
39. Best **City** Hotel – **Delhi**
40. Best **City** Hotel – **Hanoi/Ho Chi Minh City**
41. Best **City** Hotel – **Jakarta**
42. Best **City** Hotel – **Hong Kong**
43. Best **City** Hotel – **Kuala Lumpur**
44. Best **City** Hotel – **Macau**
45. Best **City** Hotel – **Manila**
46. Best **City** Hotel – **Seoul**
47. Best **City** Hotel – **Singapore**
48. Best **City** Hotel – **Taipei**
49. Best **City** Hotel – **Tokyo**
50. Best **New City** Hotel  
Best city hotel that opened in 2013/2014.
51. Best **Airport** Hotel  
Best hotel – located within the vicinity of an airport – that caters to travellers in transit.

- RESORTS – Individual Property**
52. Best **Beach** Resort  
Best resort located by a beach. This resort must also boast the best visual appeal and ambience reflecting local flavour.
53. Best **Resort** Hotel (Non-Beach)  
Best resort not located by a beach. This resort must also boast the best visual appeal and ambience reflecting local flavour.
54. Best **New Beach** Resort  
Best beach resort that opened in 2013/2014.
55. Best **Integrated** Resort  
Best hotel offering comprehensive accommodation, shopping, dining, entertainment and sports.

- SERVICED RESIDENCES**
56. Best **Serviced Residence** Operator  
Best serviced property catering to mid- and long-term staying guests.

- SPAS**
57. Best **Spa** Operator  
Best managed and operated spa or network of spas in the region.

VOTE ONLINE AT  
www.ttgasia.com/ttg-awards

## BT-MICE Awards

- Criteria**  
• Best services and facilities catering specifically to the BT-MICE market.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing the BT-MICE market.  
• Most desirable and attractive incentives and value added services to business travellers and MICE planners.
58. Best **Airline – Business Class**  
Best business class airline across the board.  
Refer to Airline Criteria.
59. Best **Business** Hotel  
Best hotel catering to the business traveller.  
Refer to Hotel Criteria.
60. Best **Meetings & Conventions** Hotel  
Best hotel catering to meeting and convention needs.  
Refer to Hotel Criteria.
61. Best **BT-MICE City**  
The city most friendly and desirable to business travellers and for MICE planners to host their events.
62. Best **Convention & Exhibition** Centre  
• Best facilities.  
• Best value for money.  
• Most flexible in catering to MICE planners.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.
63. Best **Convention & Exhibition Bureau**  
• Most efficient, flexible and friendly in terms of response to enquiries and information.  
• Most effective in raising awareness of MICE at government and community levels.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.

## Travel Services Awards

- Criteria**  
• Best product, services and facilities  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.
64. Best **Airport**  
• Best facilities.  
• Most user-friendly, efficient and hassle-free immigration.  
• Most organised baggage claim.  
• Best planned floor layout, with easy ground access.
65. Best **GDS (Global Distribution System)**  
• Most comprehensive network offering ease of operation and user friendliness.  
• Most efficient and reliable system.
66. Best **Cruise Operator**  
• Best product in terms of service, routes and schedules.  
• Best onboard programme and facilities.  
• Most agent-friendly in terms of reservations, confirmations and commission payments.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas, incentive programmes and servicing.
67. Best **NTO (National Tourism Organisation)**  
• Most efficient, flexible and friendly in terms of response to enquiries and information.  
• Most effective in raising awareness of tourism at government and community levels.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.
68. Best **Theme Attraction**  
• Best ambience.  
• Best facilities and services.  
• Most professional sales and marketing team in terms of innovative ideas and servicing.

VOTER INFORMATION	Name:		Passport no.:	
	Job title:		Company:	
	Address:			
	Country:			
	Telephone no.:		Fax no.:	
	Email:		Signature:	

VOTING CLOSES  
7 JULY 2014





PRESENT

# Run in Wonderland

## NETWORKING

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