

travelbulletin

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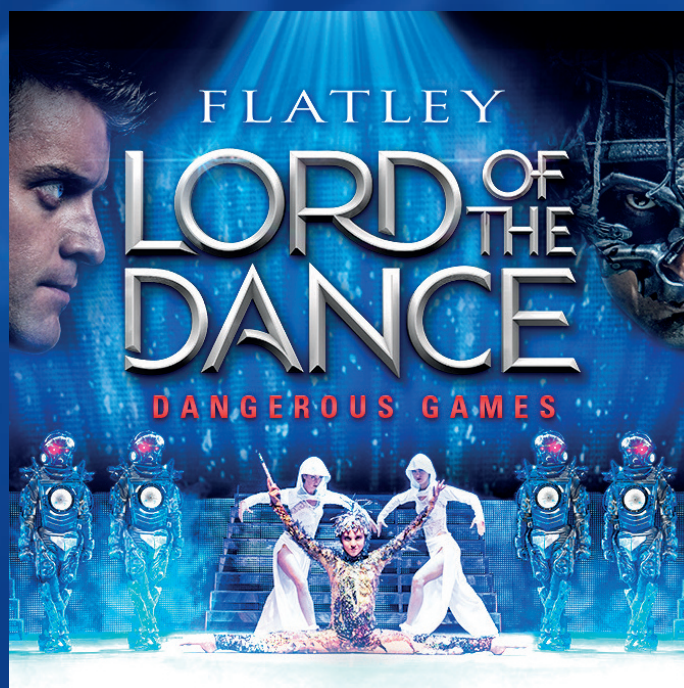
top tips to boost your
online presence





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THE LAST SUPPER

...BRIGHT held its last workshop and dinner for this year near Exeter for 25 independent travel agents, hosted by members from Viking River Cruises, Hurtigruten, Explore, Jersey Tourism, Cox and Kings, Mosaic Holidays, Attraction World, Veloso Tours, Islas Canarias and Kirker Holidays. Pictured with the group's chairman, Hisham Mahmoud (second from left) of Kirker Holidays, are, from the left: Jenny Goncalves and Tisha Warne from Bath Travel and Hamish Read, Jersey Travel.

Survey reveals Brits desire cottage breaks this winter

AS THE days get shorter and summer holidays start to feel like a distant memory, Booking.com has released its first Winter Snugs Survey, revealing how we'd like to keep warm this winter.

The research found that one in three of us claim that we'd prefer to spend the festive season at a Winter Snug than at home. And despite being a nation of 'tech-lovers' – with many Brits opting to book their Winter Snugs online – cosy pastimes and traditional yuletide festivities take precedence over Wi-Fi connection when it comes to downing tools over the Christmas period.

According to the survey of more than 2,000 Brits, most see their Winter Snug as the ideal place to relax and unwind or be romantic with our partner. Other findings revealed that 50% of Generation X – those

most likely to have a job or a family – sees their Winter Snug primarily as a place to spend time getting cosy and sentimental with a significant other.

Jason Grist, the company's UK area manager, said: "With the average Brit having more than a week of paid holiday left to take before the year is out (6.5 days each), there is a great opportunity to explore the wonderfully varied selection of Winter Snugs that is on offer. The ease and convenience of booking accommodation online means that thousands of options are available at the click of a button."

In the survey, the top five essential elements that Brits are looking for in their snug include a log fire (74%), a steaming pot of slow-cooked stew (45%), hot chocolate (43%), a large bath (42%) and Wi-Fi (39%).

Skyscanner offers its top destination predictions for 2015

SKYSCANNER HAS released its predictions for the top ten destination hot spots to watch in 2015. A mix of countries and cities, they range from mainstream, well-known destinations such as Mykonos and Australia's Gold Coast to the more intrepid destinations of Siem Reap and Nicaragua. The predictions are based on the analysis of millions of the company's flight searches from the last three years, combined with

qualitative research carried out by futurology companies, The Future Laboratory and Trendhunter providing additional insight on consumer trends and influences.

Siem Reap in the Northwest of Cambodia tops the list with a 33% increase in searches from the UK, followed closely by Fort Lauderdale, Florida (32%) and Mykonos, Greece (31%). In fourth place is Brazil, followed by Australia's Gold

Coast, Nicaragua, Seoul, Colombo, Taipei and Panama.

Commenting on the findings, the company's Mary Porter said: "While Spain, the US and France continue to be the most popular holiday destinations for Brits year after year, and we don't anticipate this changing any time soon, we know that many of our customers like to be ahead of the trend with

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Las Vegas experiences to whet the appetite from Attraction World

ATTRACTION WORLD has added new water-based experiences in Las Vegas.

A Vegas Three-Day Pool Pass costs £12 per person and is ideal for clients looking to experience some of the most popular day clubs and pool parties. It offers complimentary admission to multiple pools over three days including Web Republic at MGM Grand, Daylight at Mandalay Bay, LIQUID at Aria, Rehab at Hard Rock Hotel and Venus at Caesars.

Highlights include

express club entry, drink specials, complimentary admission and transport in a Luxury Party Bus with complimentary drinks. The pass can be used either on consecutive days or on random days.

A Vegas Pool Crawl on Wheels is also new to the operator's portfolio. Prices lead in at £45 and the tour transports guests (in a luxury party bus with unlimited drinks) between two days clubs, which include Wet Republic at MGM Grand, Daylight at



Mandalay Bay, LIQUID at Aria, Rehab at Hard Rock Hotel and Venus at Caesars.

Highlights of the tour include complimentary

admission and a towel, drink specials at the check-in lounge, transport between two day clubs with unlimited beverages and a NiteLife host/guide.



SWITCHED ON

...Pictured is two Michelin-starred chef and Eurostar's business premier culinary director, Raymond Blanc OBE, who lent a hand in switching on the Eurostar Christmas tree at St Pancras International station to mark both the start of the festive season and 20 years of Eurostar.

Get into the festive spirit with Leger

A NEW guide to the best of the European Christmas markets has been launched to help fans of the festive season decide which market to visit this year.

The 16-page guide, compiled by Leger Holidays along with the independent website Christmasmarkets.com, includes top tips for first time visitors and looks at the way different countries approach Christmas markets. It also includes a handy list of the top ten markets, advice on the best places to visit for different interests, and particular food and gift specialities to look out for.

Huw Williams, marketing director at Leger, said: "A visit to the Christmas markets can be truly magical – the smell, the atmosphere, the beautiful decorations and the delicious food and drink all combine to make something very special. Many major towns and cities offer them now, but each do

it slightly differently.

"For a first time visitor it can be hard to know where to start – and for those who have been before, to decide where next! So with our inside knowledge, along with that of Christmasmarkets.com who live and breathe this all year round, we've pulled together what we hope will be a really useful and interesting guide. A tour with us takes the hassle out of a visit to the markets. We organise transport, accommodation and transfers so you don't need to worry about any of it. We also organise for you to see other local highlights whilst you're in the area, so you feel like you've really got a good flavour for the area." The guide can be found at: http://flippingbrochures.co.uk/Leger_Holidays_Insiders_Guide_to_Christmas/ For further information call 0844-504 6250 or visit www.leger.co.uk

● continued from previous page
their holiday choices and are looking to be inspired by new destinations they may never have considered before. This insight, along with our series of travel guides, will allow them to

get the most out of their next trip." For more information on the destinations including average flight prices and the cheapest time to travel visit www.skyscanner.net/news/2015hotspots

Miami promo from Funway Holidays

FUNWAY HOLIDAYS is promoting all things Miami with the launch of 'Miami Month' which commences on December 1.

The promotion includes specially arranged rates with Thomas Cook Airlines and prices lead in at £669 per person based on five nights at the three-star Four Points by Sheraton Miami Beach. Based on two adults sharing, it includes flights from Manchester direct to Miami for travel on May 3, 2015.

Alternatively, a five-night stay at the four-star The James Royal Palm – South Beach, based on two adults sharing, costs from £779 including flights from Manchester on September 20, 2015.

For further information see www.funway4agents.co.uk

Cosmos Tours & Cruises offers £400 off new Mekong river cruise

COSMOS TOURS & Cruises has launched a river cruise on the Mekong River for 2015 with £400 off per person.

The 15-day 'Majestic Mekong Cruise', on the four diamond rated RV Indochine, cruises from Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City harbour to the great lake of Tonle Sap in Cambodia and in reverse, and offers a small ship experience with spacious cabins.

Prices lead in at £2,359 per person including flights, an eight-night cruise on an all-inclusive basis, four nights' breakfast accommodation, guided excursions and transfers.

For further information or to book see www.cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk



TO NAMIBIA AND BEYOND

Africa and Beyond hosted a fam trip to Namibia earlier this month. The group stayed in top end guesthouses, lodges and camps and visited the capital, Windhoek, along with iconic sights of Sossusvlei, the famous sand dunes, the coastal Bavarian town of Swakopmund and the flamingos and pelicans of Walvis Bay. The group also took a hot-air balloon flight, slept out under the stars and experienced a light-aircraft scenic flight along the dramatic shipwreck laden Skeleton Coast. Pictured ready to take their scenic flights are, from the left: Jacqueline Steadman, TravelTime World; Allison Bruce, Westway Travel; Rob Morley, Africa & Beyond host; Jill Bentley, WorldWide Escapes; Mark Brewer, Imp Travel; Jessica Sherrieff, Triangle Travel; Janet Colson, Symphony World Travel; and Sonia Dixon (front), Holidays Please.

Expedia TAAP launches new set of online tools

IN AN effort to improve its service, Expedia TAAP (Expedia Travel Agent Affiliate Program) has announced the release of new 'self-help' online tools to streamline booking changes for travel agents.

The new tools allow agents to modify hotel booking dates, room types and update the number of people in an existing reservation. It also supports name changes and can add special requests for hotel bookings after the booking has been completed.

The new tools are among a number of new initiatives being implemented by the

company, and the 'edit booking buttons' will be seen on existing bookings in the Expedia TAAP Itineraries.

The company has also recently unveiled a new homepage featuring responsive design and a simpler, more streamlined layout to bring travel imagery and its search interface into focus. The new site is optimised for both desktop and mobile devices and loading speeds for the page have also doubled.

For further information see www.expedia.co.uk/taap, call 020-3027 9793 or email taexpediauk@expedia.com

Marrakech Riad's boutique hotels launched to the trade

MARRAKECH RIAD, which is English owned and managed and consists of four boutique hotels in the old town Medina of Marrakech, has made its trade debut.

The company's brochure is aimed at helping travel agents and tour operators sell the riad properties which include Riad Papillon, Riad Cinnamon, Dar Habiba and the latest addition to the portfolio, Riad Star. Former merchants' houses, the four properties have each been restored working with traditional materials and craftsmen while incorporating modern conveniences. Guests can expect complimentary toiletries, breakfast served

at the time of their choosing, help booking restaurants and excursions, iPod docking stations and Wi-Fi.

The company has a UK based reservations team and offers agents a range of local know-how via its website, Marrakech-Riad.co.uk, with regularly updated articles featuring tips on making the most of the imperial city.

The operator's owner, Mike Wood, said: "Staying in a riad is a fantastic way to soak up the atmosphere of the old town in true comfort and style. Our English-speaking Moroccan hosts are on hand to offer guests everything they need to make the most of their visit

whilst enjoying a truly local flavour of magical Marrakech. The riads are perfect for romantic breaks, family trips and even groups looking to rent a whole house for a special occasion. I'm very much looking forward to sharing our beautiful riads with trade partners."

As an example of prices, Dar Habiba is a traditional secluded riad offering one suite and five rooms, based on up to 14 people sharing. It features a shady courtyard, a dipping pool and roof terrace, and rooms cost from £75 to £180 per night including breakfast. For further information visit www.marrakech-riad.co.uk

Seven-day 'Walking in Madeira' option from £1,389 with Solos Holidays

SOLOS HOLIDAYS is featuring a week's Walking in Madeira tour for single travellers who'd like to escape the traditional Christmas in the UK.

The itinerary takes in the

festive atmosphere of Madeira's capital, Funchal, which transforms into a festival of light, colour and sound at this time of year and hosts a street party on December 23.

The tour departs on December 22 and costs from £1,389 per person including flights from Gatwick (or £1,429 from Manchester), breakfast accommodation in a twin or double room (for

single use) at the four-star Hotel Girrasol, four lunches and five dinners, plus four guided walks.

To book call 0844-371 8860 or see

www.solosholidays.co.uk

'Click to Chat' launch from Virgin Holidays

VIRGIN HOLIDAYS has launched 'Click to Chat', a new initiative for travel agents.

The new service, located at www.vhols4agents.com, is designed to help agents save time by receiving answers to quick questions such as 'Is summer 2016 on sale yet?' or 'How do I order brochures?', by live chatting with a dedicated, knowledgeable sales centre team member.

The introduction of the new service means that agents can quickly and easily resolve a basic query in just minutes.

For more information or to book visit

www.vhols4agents.co.uk or call 0844-557 3933.

Germanwings adds Istanbul flights

ISTANBUL HAS been added to Germanwings' route schedule. Departing from Düsseldorf, flights take off every Tuesday at 10:35 and land at Istanbul Airport (Sabiha Gökçen) at 14:50 local time.

On Saturdays, the plane leaves the North Rhine-Westphalia regional capital at 06:05 and lands at 10:20 local time in Istanbul.

For more information visit www.germanwings.com



Explore unveils new Walking and Trekking self-guided collection in Europe

EXPLORE HAS launched a new self-guided programme in Europe. The tours comprise of ten walking and trekking adventures which offer customers the flexibility and freedom to decide on when they travel and experience their chosen destination at their own pace, with luggage transfers provided.

As one of the new tours for 2015/16, Tenerife and La Gomera is an eight-day easy-to-moderate graded walking tour on the two Canary Islands. Customers will hike on El Teide, Tenerife's volcano, explore La Gomera's verdant Garajonay National Park and soak up the atmosphere in the harbour town of San Sebastian.

Customers can also visit the Botanical Gardens at Juego de Bolas and take in the rock formations. Departures are available year-round and cost from £655 per person based on two

sharing. The price includes seven nights' breakfast accommodation, three other meals and luggage transfer services.

Alternatively, an eight-day Coastal Trails of Portugal provides customers with a moderate graded walking tour, where guests can take in the unspoilt coastal views, discover Cabo Sao Vicente, the most south-western point of continental Europe and visit the historic town of Vila do Bispo. There is also time for customers to take in the sights of the white-washed villages in the Western Algarve. Departures are available from April 1 to October 15, 2015 and prices lead in at £345 per person, based on two sharing, including hotel accommodation on a bed-and-breakfast basis and luggage transfers.

For further information or to book visit www.explore.co.uk or call 01252-884723.

Proexport rebrands as PROCOLOMBIA

THE COLOMBIAN trade, investment and tourism promotion body, Proexport has completed its rebrand to PROCOLOMBIA following an eight-month process led by its president Juan Manuel Santos Calderón.

The move comes after a survey of Colombian and foreign entrepreneurs concluded that the name Proexport did not reflect either the body's connection to Colombia or its broad remit, which covers promoting investment and tourism as well as exports.

The body will work to position the country's brand, consolidate Colombia as a tourist destination and coordinate its promotional activities with public and private agencies that can help capitalise on the country's name, and position it as a supplier of quality products and services.

Newsbites

- **BRICK 2014** is currently exhibiting at London's ExCeL (until November 30) to offer family fun for LEGO fans, showcasing the finest in LEGO building. With tomorrow and Sunday now sold out, fans are advised to grab tickets for today following the announcement of increased opening hours until 21:00.
For details see www.brick2014.com
- **WHEN PLANNING** permission was originally granted to Southend Airport's owners, Stobart Group, both Southend Borough and Rochford District Councils stipulated that the new building must achieve a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology) certificate to the equivalent of 'Very Good'. The airport has confirmed that this has now been achieved with an overall score of 57.9%.
- **CAPE TOWN Hollow** in South Africa's Cape Town has reopened following a refurbishment. The new boutique style hotel features new amenities in guestrooms including flat screen TVs and modern en-suite shower rooms. To launch the new look, the hotel is keeping its rates at this year's levels for the rest of 2014/15.
For details email reservations@capetownhollow.co.za or see www.capetownhollow.co.za
- **WARNER LEISURE Hotels** has released a selection of two-night midweek breaks at a number of its country and coastal locations on selected dates this month and next from £89 per person. The breaks include a hotel room or chalet accommodation, buffet breakfast, three-course evening meals with the Simply Dine package, a range of activities plus live entertainment every night.
For details see www.bourneleisuresales.co.uk or call 0808-141111.

Early booking deals from Bourne

BOURNE LEISURE has launched a range of early booking offers to help agents secure sales of breaks across its three UK brands for their customers.

Guests at Butlins can save up to 25% on every 2015 break booked before February 3 and the seaside resorts are also offering 'First Child Eats Free' when customers add a dining plan at the time of booking, with deposits from £30 per person.

With Haven, agents' customers can save up to 50% on selected seven-night off peak holidays or up to 25% on school and Bank holidays and all short breaks in 2015 when booked before February 8, 2015. Clients can also receive an extra 5% off all seven-night bookings departing before June 26, 2015 if they book by December 31. The exclusive offer is only available to customers booking via a travel agent.

Meanwhile, Warner Leisure Hotels is offering savings of up to 50% on thousands of rooms and, when agents book any break before December 22, the lowest price is guaranteed. Agents booking their customers on a 2015 break at Bembridge Coast Hotel or Norton Grange on the Isle of Wight can also offer their clients half price ferry crossings, with deposits starting from £35 per person.
For further information see www.bourneleisuresales.co.uk

SuperBreak responds to demand with additional Flanders cruise departure

WITH TWO dates already sold out, SuperBreak has added a third departure date for its 'Flanders Fields' mini-cruise break and tour with P&O.

Departing from Hull, the itinerary visits Bruges before heading to Ypres for a full tour, which aims to confront people with the past and commemorate the fallen heroes. The new departure date is March 14, 2015 and prices start from £159 per person.

The three night/four day P&O mini-cruise break includes a return journey from Hull to Zeebrugge with overnight cabin both ways, a transfer to Bruges for a few hours exploring before heading to Ypres to visit the Flanders Fields Museum and take in the Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate. Overnight accommodation in Ypres is at the Novotel Ypres Centre and the following day a full itinerary is included with highlights including the Germany military cemetery at Vladslo, the town of Diksmuide; Tyne Cot Cemetery where 12,000 fallen soldiers of the Commonwealth are laid to rest; Essex Farm a former field hospital; Hill 60 – famous for the tunneling war and 'Caterpillar Crater' and much more. The day ends with a transfer back to Zeebrugge for a return journey overnight to Hull.

Prices include an inside cabin (£169 outside), transfers, overnight in Ypres and full day tour, and the tour is based on two sharing.

For more information see www.superbreak.com/agents or call 01904-436000.

www.travelbulletin.co.uk

Go

WEBSCLUSIVES

- For the chance to win 10 bottles of champagne courtesy of **La Champagne**, head over to the competitions page at <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>
- Don't miss out on the chance to see the Northern Lights! **Omega Holidays** are offering a free trip for two in search of the Northern Lights. To enter the competition go to <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>
- Christmas is coming and to win an iPad Mini, an Amazon Kindle, £50 Selfridges voucher, Molton Brown hamper and Gear4 House Party Wireless Speakers all courtesy of **TripMule** enter the competition at <http://www.travelbulletin.co.uk/competitions>

All this and more at:

www.travelbulletin.co.uk

The home of the web savvy travel agent

Travel Bulletin recently attended Anatolian Sky's 25th birthday celebrations. The gala dinner was held at The St John's Hotel in Solihul. Here's the event in pictures...



ALL SMILES...

Stephanie Robbins parties with Simon Eddolls, sales director at Travel Bulletin.



DREAM TEAM...

pictured left to right is: Daisy Marwaha, senior travel consultant, Anatolian Sky Holidays; Baroness Kramer of Richmond Park, minister of state for transport; Akin Koc, MD, Anatolian Sky Holidays; Sarah Tetik, Dream Time Travel, Brighton.



BELLY LAUGH...

Akin Koc dances with the belly dancer.



TURKEY TRIO....

from left to right are: Stephanie Robbins, UK agency sales manager at Anatolian Sky Holidays; Tracy Carter of Carrick Travel; and Kay Oram from The Travel Shop, Sutton Coldfield.



BROAD APPEAL...

Alan Broad of BB Collection Ltd catches up with Leanne Taylor, sales manager at Anatolian Sky Holidays (left); and Kim Kent of Spear Travels.



FLY ME AWAY...

Tracy Carter of Carrick Travel receives her prize of two Turkish Airlines tickets to anywhere in the world from Selim Ozturk, general manager of Turkish Airlines.



CHEERS...

Joining the celebrations are from the left: Libby and Peter Cookson, Spear Travels; Stephanie Robbins, UK agency sales manager, Anatolian Sky; Frances and Russell Peak, Peakes Travel Elite, Shrewsbury.

Booking incentives

- **VISIONS OF AFRICA** is giving agents the chance to win a case of South African wine when they make a booking to any destination in Africa including flights with South African Airways. Agents are then asked to email the booking reference and the answer to the following question: Which terminal at Heathrow has SAA recently moved to? to abbey@visionsholidaygroup.co.uk. The winner will be drawn on Friday December 12.
- **THE VILLAS** at Stonehaven, a luxury villa resort in Tobago, is celebrating an increase in British Airways flights and the return of Virgin Atlantic to the island in 2015, with an agent competition to win either a case of Champagne or one of two £50 House of Fraser shopping vouchers. To enter, agents should email details of any bookings made to Stonehaven to reservations@escapemarketing.net by December 15. Winners will be chosen at random and bookings can be made through tour operators or direct to the property, for any travel date for a minimum seven-night stay.
- **PREMIER HOLIDAYS** is offering a new agent incentive following the launch of its new SeaWorld campaign which offers exclusive deals. Agents can earn a £10 incentive voucher for every SeaWorld ticket booked before December 15 in addition to the operator's trade incentive, which offers agents the chance to earn between £25-£150 per Florida booking, dependent on the booking value.

Agent offer

AGENTS CAN now enjoy a 'Night at the Movies' courtesy of MSC Cruises, which is hosting a series of free cinema nights across the UK in December. Dates include Tuesday December 2 at Dudley Showcase cinema and Wednesday December 3 at both Cardiff Showcase cinema and Southampton Odeon cinema. The start time is 18:30-18:45 and agents will also receive free popcorn and a free drink. To reserve your place email MSC@3for.marketing. Spaces are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

TRAINING UPDATES

- **TRAVEL 2** has added a range of new incentives available on its T2 Academy programme, giving agents more reason to sharpen up their knowledge. Agents can get their hands on up to 14 prizes including luxury holidays, fam trips and shopping vouchers by completing a range of selected modules before December 14. Agents can earn up to £40 worth of shopping vouchers on the online training portal by collecting T2 points, which are accumulated year-round on completion of each module. For details or to register for the academy visit www.t2academy.co.uk
- **TRAVEL BULLETIN** is hosting an Airline Showcase event in London on January 19. The evening will consist of both informal and speed networking opportunities, prize giving and a hot buffet dinner. For details on exhibiting email jeanette.ratcliffe@travelbulletin.co.uk. Agents can attend the event for free by sending an email to tasneem.rahman@travelbulletin.co.uk to register before January 9, 2015.



GRAB IT TO NAB IT... Kelly Giblin from SuperBreak 'grabs' a short break to mark the launch of a new social media competition for agents, which offers £100 of SuperBreak vouchers. To enter, agents need to upload a photo of them 'grabbing' a short break, detailing the destination and their ABTA number. Two competitions are running consecutively: on Facebook pictures need to be uploaded to the 'SuperBreak for Travel Agents' page and the operator will select a winner, and on Twitter, pictures need to be posted with the hashtag #GrabAShortBreak and tagged with @SuperbreakAgent and the prize will be awarded for the picture with the most favourites and retweets. Entries for both competitions need to be submitted by December 31 and the winners will be drawn on Friday January 2, 2015.

HRS survey reveals business travellers want greater flexibility in length of stay

A SURVEY by global Hotel Solutions Provider HRS, conducted with the Fraunhofer Institute, has revealed that the majority of business travellers would like more flexibility when it comes to staying in a hotel.

In order of priority, business travellers said that they would like to be able to adjust their check-out time by three hours, book a hotel according to three daily time blocks and lastly be able to

book accommodation by the hour.

The research, which polled more than 650 individuals from across the globe, also showed that 60% of business travellers rarely use their hotel room for the entire time it is available to them, which represents a high volume of wastage.

Talking about the findings, Jon West, the company's managing director UK and Ireland, said: "Demand for flexibility is

reflected in the growing number of luxurious airline lounges, book-by-the-hour conference centres and coffee shops packed with laptop users. The traditional hotel standard 3pm check-in and noon check-out is not meeting the needs of business travellers who often arrive in the afternoon or evening, and then leave early in the morning. Hotels should consider the changing needs of business travellers when it comes to flexibility."

New meeting room refurbishments for Elite Hotels

ELITE HOTELS has announced that its meeting and conference rooms at two of its hotels have undergone refurbishments.

Sussex retreat, Ashdown Park Hotel & Country Club, has refurbished its Mary Towneley Lounge where delegates can relax and unwind between meetings, brainstorm ideas as a breakout area or host a drinks reception.

The refurbishment has taken inspiration from its use in 1920, when Ashdown Park was a convent and the Mary Towneley Lounge was used by nuns as a place of deep contemplation. The lounge, which overlooks the east wing courtyard, offers delegates a tranquil and private area with direct access out to a

secluded and picturesque outdoor setting. Facilities include an LED TV screen, two tea and coffee service stations with a variety of teas, speciality coffees and a chilled drinks cabinets. This month will also see the addition of a lift, which will enable motorised wheelchair access to the first floor, where many



meetings and weddings take place.

Meanwhile, Hampshire country house retreat, Tylney Hall Hotel & Gardens, has refurbished its Chestnut Suite where delegates can now benefit from new furnishings, lighting, and a state-of-the-art sound system, as well as a complete redecoration and new cloakroom facilities.

For more information see www.ashdownpark.com and www.tylneyhall.com

CHESSINGTON WORLD OF ADVENTURES

Resort is giving away a free iPad with every corporate event booked at the resort in January and February 2015. The offer is valid for bookings made by the end of this month for a minimum of £5,000. For details email resort.enquiries@chessington.co.uk or call 01372-734618.

London Marriott Hotel Kensington relauches business and events space

FOLLOWING A £1.3million renovation, the London Marriott Hotel Kensington has relaunched its meeting and events spaces.

Featuring modern design and the latest wireless technology, the hotel's nine flexible and interchangeable rooms can host a total of 235 delegates over two floors, or up to 100 delegates in the largest meeting space.

The hotel group's aim is to revolutionise the guest experience throughout its properties, tailoring technology and design to guest expectation. The renovation at the London Marriott Hotel Kensington – the group's third European hotel to host its next generation meeting spaces, after Amsterdam Marriott and Munich Marriott – brings secure internet connectivity, wireless enabled LED screens and projectors, and the BARCO Click Share system that allows multiple laptops and tablets to connect to screens wirelessly.

In addition, a Meeting Services App called Red Coat Direct gives event planners immediate communication with the hotel team, prompting an instant response without the organiser having to leave the meeting room.

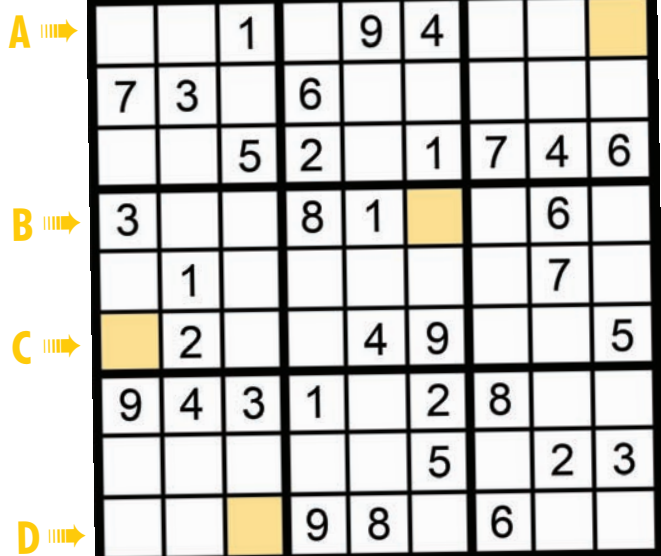
Delegates can also experience interactive meeting room features.

For more information visit www.marriotthotels.com

Su Doku

Win a £50 M&S voucher in the [Travelbulletin](#) Su Doku prize puzzle

Number: 045



Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3 x 3 squares contains the digits 1-9.

Once you have completed the puzzle, simply identify the numbers that relate to the letters, A, B, C and D then e-mail the solution, with your name, company name, and full postal address plus phone and ABTA number if applicable to:

competition@travelbulletin.co.uk

Closing date for entries is Thursday, December 4th. Solution and new puzzle will appear next week.

The winner for 14th November is Micheal Martinez, Personal Travel Counsellors in Bolton

November 14 Solution: A=6 B=5 C=7 D=8

Travagrams

Can you solve the following anagrams to decipher the destination & tour operator?



This operator specialises in holidays to Africa, Greece, Turkey, Italy.



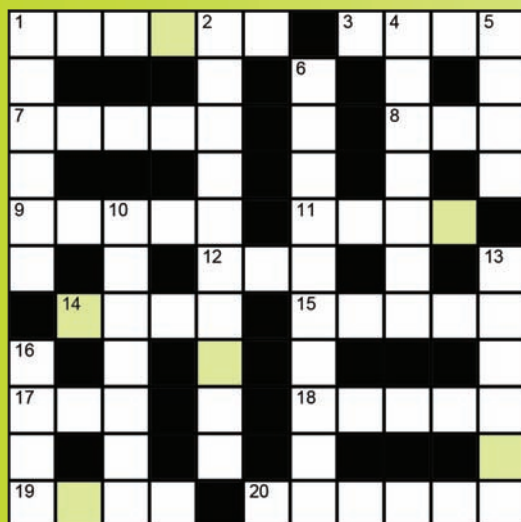
A city on the southern coast of Cyprus

Where Am I?



Spicy mountains in Cambodia?

Crossword



Fill in the crossword to reveal the mystery location highlighted by the green squares.

Across

1. UAE flag carrier (6)
3. Hotel chain, sounds like a bird (4)
7. The ___ offers condo-style living on the high seas (5)
8. Airline operating from Prague (3)
9. The highest mountain in the UK, Ben ___ (5)
11. Capital of Qatar (4)
12. Alderney Channel Isles airport code (3)
14. Original surname of Sir Cliff Richard (4)
15. City in the south of France with a famous Roman amphitheatre (5)
17. Hotel brand, Holiday ___ (3)
18. Party game, ___ or Dare (5)
19. Capital of Peru (4)
20. Esenboga International airport serves this Turkish city (6)

Down

1. First name of former MP seen in the 2014 celebrity jungle (6)
2. Capital of Ethiopia (5,5)
4. David, star of the Haig Club whisky ad set in Scotland (7)
5. Airline alliance (4)
6. Found at a railway station, this bear is now appearing at a cinema near you (10)
10. Hanoi is the capital (7)
13. Italian holiday isle (6)
16. American actor, ___ Smith (4)

For the solution to the Crossword, Where Am I? and Travagrams, please see page 22

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SALA PHUKET RESORT & SPA

Indulge in a SALA Pool Villa with a 4-night stay at SALA Phuket Resort and Spa.



THE COSMOPOLITAN OF LAS VEGAS

Roll high in Las Vegas with a 3-night stay at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas including private airport transfer.



BANYAN TREE LANG CO, VIETNAM

Discover the mystique of central Vietnam with a 5-night stay at Banyan Tree and Angsana Lang Co.



EXPERIENCE KISSIMMEE FLORIDA

Treat yourself with a £100 shopping voucher with Experience Kissimmee, the gateway to fun.



MULIA RESORT - NUSA DUA BALI

Treat yourself in Bali at 2014 Conde Nast's Top Resort in the world, with a 5-night stay in a Grandeur Room at Mulia Resort - Nusa Dua, Bali.



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Have a fun day out courtesy of the world-famous SeaWorld®, Discovery Cove®, Aquatica™ and Busch Gardens® with a £150 shopping voucher.



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RENAISSANCE PHUKET RESORT

Discover the white sandy beach of Mai Khao with a 3-night stay at blissful Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa.



STARWOOD HOTELS & RESORT - WAIKIKI

Magical Hawaii is at your fingertips with a 4 - night stay at Starwood Hotels & Resort - Waikiki.



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Industry Insight by... The Global Travel Group

Darren Zabinski, head of marketing at The Global Travel Group, on why it's important to roll out targeted marketing campaigns during the turn of the year booking period

BY THE time you read this, you will no doubt be on Christmas party number five, be in a blind panic on what to buy the missus for Christmas and possibly a little bit sick of seeing the annoyingly lovable Monty the Penguin and his new girlfriend...

Before you start muttering 'bah humbug' and turn the page, let me set the record straight. I love Christmas, I love the hype, the anticipation of a New Year being just around the corner and I also rather like the odd mulled wine or two and catching up with friends and family.

Coming from a marketing background, I am also always intrigued about the marketing spend some of the big retailers drop at Christmas time. Whilst I am, of course, not privy to the figures, it doesn't take much to figure out that recreating the famous football match that took place between the British and German forces in 1914, to mark the 100-year anniversary of the start of the First World War carries a pretty steep price tag. Whilst the majority of the travel industry doesn't have the same type of budgets to play with, it got me thinking about how important it is to make sure we are rolling out targeted marketing campaigns during the key turn of year booking period.

Here at Global we have had our 2015 marketing campaigns available to agents, free of charge since July. We engage our suppliers for 12 months, giving each supplier the chance to commit to at least three campaigns, covering print, social and digital. This allows us to provide our agents with a calendar of marketing activity for them to choose from. By signing up our suppliers to a fixed campaign plan it allows us to pass on those all-important stronger commercial deals to our agents.

"Coming from a marketing background, I am also always intrigued about the marketing spend some of the big retailers drop at Christmas time"

"Turn of year can be a pretty hectic time for the industry and there are plenty of sales to be secured.

Making things as easy as possible for our agents is the very lifeblood of keeping our members happy and helping them to secure the all-important sales at such a busy time"

With the marketing campaigns running for the year, agents can select those campaigns most relevant to them. Cruise specialists can select the cruise marketing campaign, order their materials – everything from window cards, posters, website banners or e-shots – to give themselves time to market the campaign as their own and then roll this out to their customers. This flexibility ensures agents are provided with the practical and targeted information required to secure sales. All of our marketing tools are completely free and agents are encouraged to continuously get in touch with me and my team at Global headquarters for help and support.

Turn of year can be a pretty hectic time for the industry and there are plenty of sales to be secured. Making things as easy as possible for our agents is the very lifeblood of keeping our members happy and helping them to secure the all-important sales at such a busy time.

So whilst you may not be throwing millions of pounds at TOY activity, getting your marketing campaign updated and ready to go live should help secure more sales and be placed one step up on the to-do-list ahead of 'buy more egg-nog'.
To find out more about the marketing support we offer, you can email me at darren.zabinski@globaltravelgroup.com.

Milos

medislands

Islands of Greece offers ten-night escape from £899

A TEN-night Greek break from Islands of Greece combines the golden beaches of Serifos, the mountainous island of Sifnos and the unique island of Milos, where guests can swim in a crystal clear fjord.

The itinerary includes four nights in Serifos, three nights in Sifnos and three nights in Milos, with prices starting

from £899 per person, based on two sharing. It includes flights from Heathrow, all transfers and ten nights' accommodation. *To book or for more information call 01444-225641, email enquiries@islands-of-greece.co.uk or see www.islands-of-greece.co.uk*



Serifos

Mallorca & Ibiza property additions in On Tour brochure from Jet2holidays

JET2HOLIDAYS HAS launched its expanded On Tour brochure for summer 2015, which includes a range of new hotels on the Mediterranean islands of Mallorca and Ibiza.

As examples, the three-star Club B Mallorca in Magaluf offers an ideal setting for budget-conscious clients looking for a prime location in the centre of Magaluf. Meanwhile, the three-star Fergus Magaluf Resort

offers both a laid-back pool area and a party pool, while the three-star Hotel Samos, also in Magaluf, is in the heart of the resort, adjacent to BCM nightclub.

Prices for a seven-night stay at Club B Mallorca, departing from Manchester on May 8, 2015, lead in at £319 per person including 22kg luggage allowance and shuttle transfers.

In Ibiza, the three-star Hotel Mare Nostrum is new to the operator's

programme for 2015 and offers a great atmosphere, close to the beach and Playa D'En Bossa's famous nightlife. Other new additions include the adult-only, two-star Azuline S'Anfora & Fleming Hotel and the three-star, adult-only Invisa Es Pla.

As examples of prices, a seven-night stay at the two-star Azuline S'Anfora & Fleming Hotel, departing from East Midlands on May 18, 2015, costs £316 per

person including 22kg luggage allowance and shuttle transfers. Alternatively, a seven-night, all-inclusive stay at the three-star San Remo in San Antonio Bay, departing from East Midlands Airport on May 4, 2015, costs from £432 including luggage allowance and shuttle transfers.

For more information call 0800-408 5587 or visit <https://tradesite.jet2holidays.com>

TRAVEL TALKS

by John Guinn, holiday researcher

John highlights the attractions of the 'black pearl of the Mediterranean'



John Guinn runs Holiday Hut and has a weekly travel show on internet radio station, Secklow Sounds. He also contributes regularly to UK Health Radio.

LOCATED SOUTHWEST of Sicily, and northeast of Tunisia, Pantelleria (Daughter of the Wind) is a terraced volcanic island. There are signs that this island has been inhabited for 35,000 years and most of the inhabitants have left their mark, such as the domed Moorish buildings and the sesi megalithic tombs. Some place names still have their Arab roots.

Once on Pantelleria, head to one of the hot springs for a relaxing dip. The thermal waters around the island are said to have therapeutic properties. Maybe this is due to the slight radioactivity of the water. One thermal pool in a cave (the Cave of Calypso) at Santaria is said to be the love nest of Calypso and Ulysses. Here the water matches the average human internal temperature of 98.6°F

As well as the thermal pools there is other evidence of the volcanic nature of the island, such as steam jets, called favare, shooting out of the rocks and caves known as 'dry baths', whose vapours are said to cure rheumatism. The last major eruption on the island was in 1891.

Pantelleria is also known as the 'black pearl of the Mediterranean' due to the black lava that covers most of the island. However one of the more striking places here isn't black, it is the bright blue lake of Specchio di Venere (Mirror of Venus).

When staying here it is possible to stay in a dammisi. These are the domed Moorish buildings that are dotted around the island. There are around 3,000 remaining and some have been converted into tourist accommodation. Simply furnished, these buildings have thick lava walls that keep the interior cool in the summer, and many offer great views of the aquamarine sea surrounding Pantelleria.

The island is reached by overnight ferry from Sicily, or by air, and there are flights from both mainland Italy and Sicily.



Nine-night Greek Island Explorer option for £1,050 from Trafalgar

TRAFALGAR IS offering a nine-night 'Greek Island Explorer' option from £1,050 per person.

The trip takes guests to see the Acropolis, Hadrian's Arch and the Temple of Zeus, before taking in the islands of Mykonos and Santorini. Guests will spend three nights on the two islands, before heading back to the Greek capital of Athens.

Prices lead in at £1,050 per person land-only and include breakfast accommodation, VIP door-to-door airport transfers, sightseeing and the services of a travel director throughout.

For more information visit www.trafalgar.com

Insight adds Croatian island-hopping option for 2015

NEW FOR next year, Insight Vacations has added 'Dalmatian Elegance' which cruises the waters of the Adriatic on a modern mega yacht.

Guests will take in a selection of Croatia's islands including Korcula (where guests will visit a local winery), Hvar, Brac and Mljet where the cruise manager will take guests for a stroll to the Veliko Jezero (Big Lake) national park.

Mainland Croatia is not left out, with visits to Dubrovnik, the resort of Trogir and Kuna on the Peljesac Peninsula, well known for its wines.

Prices start from £1,310 per person, land and sea-only and include eight nights' breakfast accommodation, door-to-door transfers, sightseeing and the services of a travel director throughout.

For more information visit www.insightvacations.com



HOTEL TRES

...in Palma, Mallorca is offering a double room with breakfast from €170. The hotel is open year-round and is an ideal base for a winter city break to explore the city of Palma. For more information see www.hoteltres.com

Mallorca's Pollensa highlights year-round sport & leisure activities

IN 2015 Pollensa Tourism will be promoting its year-round sports & leisure activities that are available in the region. There will be a major focus on nature and wildlife, including walking, hiking and birdwatching in the UNESCO Tramuntana mountains and the Cap de Formentor, which features more than 200 varieties of birds. A new birdwatching brochure has also been produced and is available

from local tourist offices in the region.

Meanwhile, there is a plethora of walking and hiking routes around the Tramuntanas, and Pollenca makes an ideal base for exploring the area. The area is also popular for cyclists and offers a selection of rental agencies, bike storage and public rental schemes. See www.enjoypollensa.com and www.pollensa.com for more information.



Last chance to take advantage of MSC Cruises' Med promotion

MSC CRUISES is giving holidaymakers the chance to grab its early booking deals by making its summer 2015 sailings all-inclusive plus giving an additional on-board credit of £100 per cabin.

The 'Mad about the Med' promotion applies to all Mediterranean sailings next summer, when booked by this

Sunday (November 30).

Between April and November 2015, the line will offer more than 200 seven-night sailings from its home ports of Venice, Genoa and La Spezia.

The offer is valid on both cruise-only and fly/cruise packages, and with an adult all-inclusive package normally priced at £154 per person and a child's

package valued at £70, the deal means a family of four receive benefits worth £448 on a typical seven-day sailing, along with an additional £100 credit to spend on extras such as spa treatments, excursions or in speciality restaurants.

For more information see www.msccruises.co.uk or call 020-3426 3010.



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Seats are subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.



BH MALLORCA

...the new concept hotel opening in summer 2015 in Magaluf, Mallorca has commenced renovations at the former Mallorca Rocks hotel. The 656 three-star apartments will undergo a complete transformation, upgrading to four-star suites, complete with free Wi-Fi, air-conditioning and flat screen TVs. Suites will be furnished in a modern, fresh style, offering spacious and quality accommodation, sleeping four adults, and all public areas will also be transformed with the construction of an on-site waterpark, beach club and event arena. The resort is on sale with a range of main operators including Jet2, TUI and Thomas Cook, and the property will be open from April 30. For more information agents can email helloagent@gchmallorca.com

Attraction World offers prices from £63 at fun parks in Mallorca

ATTRACTION WORLD is promoting a day out for the whole family, visiting two fun parks in Mallorca.

The Marineland & Katmandu day out costs from £63 for adults and £39 for kids (aged two-11). Marineland is located in Costa d'en Blanes (Calvià) and features a dolphin show, along with the opportunity for guests to see reptiles, sharks, penguins and the Mare Nostrum Museum.

Katmandu Park offers a building of more than 1,600sq.m with an upside-down exterior, eight themed rooms with detailed sets and hundreds of artefacts and collector's items.



THE HISTORIC PHOENICIA HOTEL

...in Valletta hosted a group of UK wedding planners on an educational visit to Malta with Perfect Weddings Abroad, supported by the Malta Tourism Authority. The Phoenicia created a mock-up wedding for the occasion with an extravagant dinner in the hotel's Maryanski Porch, adjacent to the Grand Ballroom. The operator's sales and marketing director, Rob Bruno, said: "Malta is becoming increasingly popular as an overseas wedding destination for UK couples, and we've seen a 10% increase year-on-year so we were delighted to take part in this educational for UK wedding planners visiting the island."

For more information on wedding packages at the hotel call 0800-862 0025 or visit www.phoeniciamalta.com

Luxury Ibiza & Crete options by Travel 2

TRAVEL 2 is promoting luxury breaks to both Ibiza and Crete.

The company's general manager of short-haul product and purchasing, Ricky Wason, said: "For clients looking for something a little more sophisticated you can't beat the ME Ibiza Hotel. The beachside resort is set in the heart of one of the Mediterranean's most exclusive and glamorous resorts and offers a handful of rooms that include their own Jacuzzi and pools. The hotel also features a rooftop spa and rooftop beach club with pool, terrace and cocktail lounge with amazing views of the Mediterranean."

"Meanwhile, the perfect Mediterranean resort for guests looking for luxury

would have to be the Amiranides Grecotel Exclusive Resort in Crete. The guestrooms, including family rooms, feature upgrades such as private gyms, home cinemas and state-of-the-art bathrooms. The resort is ideal for both couples and families and offers six onsite restaurants."

The company is offering a seven-night breakfast stay in a Superior sea view room at the five-star Amiranides Grecotel Exclusive Resort from £699 per person, including flights from London and private transfers based on an April 16, 2015 departure.

For further information or to book see www.travel2.com or call 0800-022 4182.



Amiranides Grecotel Exclusive Resort, Crete



dt digitaltrip
THE TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

DIGITAL DIALOGUE

This is the first in a series of travel technology columns by ANDY SPEIGHT, managing director at Digital Trip. In this month's column Andy offers top tips to punch above your weight and shine online...

IS YOUR website your company's shop window? Then take a minute to put yourself in your customer's shoes and take a really good look at it. Is it just in need of a bit of spit and polish, or should you just take everything down and start again? Are you being dwarfed by the competition – can anyone even find you? Or are you one of the many travel companies that don't even have a website at all?

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

A HUGE number of travel companies are in this bracket, put off by the perceived cost and lack of in-house expertise to help them get a competitive website off the ground. This means that little fish often just stay little fish, until the big players swallow up all the market – thanks to the high profile visibility and functionality of their websites. With a few simple tips and ideas to help you understand the potential power of your website, you can take control of your online presence and ensure your shop window is more inviting and efficient than the operator next door.

BRANDING

A STRONG brand communicates the personality of your company and helps you to stand out. Invest in the services of a design professional to ensure you get it right – don't use shortcuts like clip art or imitation of an existing design – the results could be disastrous. Keep it simple, fresh, clean and original – contemporary but not 'fashionable' – to ensure it lasts a long time. On the technical side, it's important to use legible typography and to create the logo in a vector format to ensure it can be used at any size and across any media.

WEBSITE DESIGN

AGAIN THE key focus here is simple, clean, professional and consistent. Make it easy for your customers to get where they need to go by reducing clicks and keeping the design legible and consistent. Use your logo as the home page anchor in the top left, with all headers, body text and colour the same on each page throughout. Always think about multiple platforms and mobile devices – clarity and simplicity help to keep the site accessible for all.

CREATING A superb company website doesn't have to be a dark art, it's about making a few simple choices and investments up front to ensure you have the professional guidance to get it right. From that point on, its destiny is entirely in your hands.

technology

Research reveals tourism businesses lack technology that is hindering online success

RESEARCH REVEALS tourism businesses lack technology that is hindering online success.

Two different research studies have shown that tourism businesses lack technology and that this is hindering success both online and through distribution. But key advancements in tourism e-commerce software technology are now enabling tour providers to manage their businesses more efficiently and take advantage of both online sales as well as sales through distribution.

In 2011 PhoCusWright, a travel industry research firm, released a study that showed that 14% of in-destination tour and activity providers use an electronic reservation system. Despite a two-year time span, that number had changed very little when the company undertook a follow up study in 2013. The reasons for this lack of adoption vary, but the major ones include a lack of understanding of the benefits, a lack of available technology, and the costs and complexity of existing solutions.

Traditionally, tour management systems were designed to serve the needs of larger tour and excursion operators. Generally these systems were very expensive and quite complicated. Smaller tour operators, sightseeing companies, and activity providers have had to make due by using paper calendars and spreadsheet software. Because of the lack of real-time inventory management, the fear of overbooking has caused many providers to avoid taking online bookings or selling through potential distribution partners. In addition to lost revenue opportunities, these businesses have also lost out on valuable reporting opportunities.

Since 2007, Rezgo has been helping tour and activity operators to better manage their availability, capture valuable customer information and generate more revenue. The cloud hosted SaaS software, allows tour providers to sign-up to use the system without any upfront capital investment or recurring subscription costs, eliminating a primary barrier to entry for many small businesses. Once activated, the business can use the software to add or edit tour details and upload images, manage their tour or activity inventory and schedule, receive bookings through a mobile-friendly booking engine and handle phone or in-person bookings.

The software is also connected to major merchant banking systems around the world, allowing the tour business to use their own credit card processors. The business pays a small transaction fee for each booking made through the system but all other features are free to use and do not incur additional costs.

For more information visit www.rezgo.com



iTrustReviews.com launches to travel and accommodation sectors

ITRUST-REVIEWS.COM has launched to the travel and accommodation sectors, offering client review technology designed with specialist tour operators, independent hotels and agents in mind.

The new website has a made to measure application widget which allows operators, agents and accommodation providers the opportunity to display client scores, feedback and comments on their website with the ability for the principal to also comment, feedback and monitor reviews as they are posted.

Founder of the site, Tim Argent, said: "We felt that we could improve on the technology and functionality currently available at a considerably more attractive entry level price while providing a fair and more level playing field. The site has many advantages over conventional review technology. Most importantly, there is a built in safeguard against bogus postings, so only clients that have actually experienced the companies' service can post a review.

"Principals can also do their own personalised market research, which is not published to the public, and the site also provides graphical analyses of the data collected, and then benchmarks the business within the travel or accommodation sectors. A QR code generator is also incorporated into the site so reviews can be collected via smart-phones for the convenience of reviewers."

Prices start at £30 per month plus VAT for up to 100 reviews and a mailing of 500 emails per month. For details see www.itrust-reviews.com



MIKE RUSSELL (right), CEO of travel technology supplier, Comtec, has completed a buyout of the Comtec Group with support from Simon Powell, original founder of Comtec, and Finance Wales. The company is a leading supplier of travel technology to many travel businesses - from small retail businesses to large tour operators, including Dnata (Gold Medal Travel), TUI Travel and Thomas Cook. Russell's aim is to develop the company by building on customer relationships, launching new products and growing the client base.

flytographer

Girls Trip to NYC

Photographer: Lauren Colehamiro

FLYTOGRAPHER is highlighting its bespoke concierge travel photography service. Upon booking, clients are assigned a shoot concierge and the company offers local vetted photographers in more than 100 cities worldwide who will do a candid, informal photo shoot highlighting guests' location in the background. Options include 'The Short Storyteller' for 30 minutes with a local photographer in one neighbourhood and 15 digital photos for £150 up to 'A Romp Around the City' which offers two hours with a local photographer in multiple locations across the city, along with 60 digital photos for £400. For details see www.flytographer.com

Virgin chooses Microsoft to launch 'Plan-it Mojo' media partnership

VIRGIN HOLIDAYS and Microsoft have announced a two-year partnership to launch 'Plan-it Mojo', an interactive hub designed to facilitate holiday planning in the brand's style, built as an extension of the Virgin Holidays' website and supported by rich media multiplatform across Microsoft's services.

'Plan-it Mojo', built by Microsoft, is an interactive, deep-dive guide to all the operator's holiday locations across the world. Features include on-the-ground information about each destination, pulling in content from across the internet and pin-pointed using an interactive map that uses the functionality of Bing Maps. This allows users to select and save their flagged places of interest to the cloud from a number of categories such as entertainment, sport, food and drink, night life and hotels.

The 'Plan-it Mojo' hub is built using responsive design to optimise to any screen, be it PC, tablet or mobile, and is designed to provide users with a useful and easy to use tool to research, refine and book holidays.

To see the new hub in action visit <http://planitmojo.virginholidays.co.uk>

The Scottish Whisky Experience unveils new adventure app



EDINBURGH'S
WHISKY

visitor attraction, The Scotch Whisky Experience, has launched a new mobile-based whisky adventure app.

Created in partnership with Maximillion Events and Wild Goose Scotland, the app gives users the

chance to learn about the Capital's long association with the 'Water of Life', whilst also giving them the opportunity to learn more about Scotland's most famous export.

The trail will guide users on a route past some of the city's most famous landmarks, including the Usher Hall, the Scott Monument and Calton Hill, where they can complete tasks and challenges.

Along the way, players will earn points and can submit their scores once they've completed the trail. At the end of each month, the player with the highest score will win a place on one of The Scotch Whisky Experience's Whisky

Training Schools.

Susan Morrison, director and general manager of the attraction, said:

"Edinburgh and whisky have a long history and we are extremely pleased to bring both of these worlds together in our new app.

"The app is really simple to use – all anyone needs is a smartphone. It gives both visitors and locals alike the chance to explore different parts of the city, whilst learning some amazing facts along the way."

The app is available to purchase for £3.50 but, as a special launch offer, it is available free of charge to those taking any of the attraction's tours.

Heathrow Express introduces multi-currency for purchasing service technology

TRAVELLERS BETWEEN Heathrow and central London are now able to book Heathrow Express tickets in US Dollars, Euros as well as in Sterling.

The new multi-currency purchasing service, available across all digital platforms, means the company's customers can avoid foreign exchange

charges – which are typically between 2% and 5% on credit cards.

As a continuing part of the strategic partnership between Heathrow Express and Avios, the facility is exclusively available to Avios collectors, and members of the UK Avios Travel Rewards Programme,

British Airways Executive Club and Iberia Plus frequent flyer programmes can collect Avios for each journey taken on the Heathrow Express.

Multi-currency purchasing is available across the Heathrow Express website, mobile sites and trade partner sites.

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digitaltrip

THE TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

travelbulletin

Giving agents the edge

We asked our staff the following question this week:

What do you most look forward to about winter?

Publisher: Jeanette Ratcliffe

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Christmas of course!

Editor: Lauretta Wright

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A snow ball fight when the snow settles!

Assistant Editor: Jill Sayles

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Snow and mulled wine.

Contributing Editor: Paul Scudamore
post@travelbulletin.co.uk

Really sharp cold spell to kill off all the nasty bugs, real fires and snow.

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It's one step from spring

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NCL offers visual conversations with agents

NORWEGIAN CRUISE Line has adopted Zolv's visual conversation platform, Full Picture. Developed over the last 18 months under the brand SalesAssist, Full Picture makes conversations come alive by sharing photos, videos and other visual assets alongside a standard phone call.

The line has added the platform to its trade communications channels, taking agent development and training to the next level, and now offers remote one-on-one, visual conversations to improve the frequency and quality of the product and promotion training that can be delivered by its business development team.

Presenting visual content alongside existing telephone briefings now gives agents a greater understanding of the line's Freestyle Cruising product and experience, and provides a better insight into the ships' facilities and life on-board. This in turn helps agents better advise their customers, providing the consumer with more confidence in choosing the company and developing long term loyalty.

Nick Wilkinson, the line's director business development, UK, Ireland & Scandinavia, said: "In a time where matching the right cruise and ship to the right customer continues to be of paramount importance, the technology of Full Picture fits the bill, putting the knowledge into the hands of the agents more quickly and efficiently."

"We are thrilled to have cemented this partnership with Zolv, underlining our commitment to the travel trade under our trade advocacy philosophy, Partners First."

Shopping platform from Vayant Travel Technologies

VAYANT TRAVEL Technologies has unveiled its new SmartSearch product, a mixed live-transaction and precomputed shopping API.

Airlines and travel agencies can use SmartSearch to handle the high volumes of search queries from metasearch engines, as well as introduce transaction-intensive applications such as maps, calendars and various web, social and mobile promotions.

The flexible SmartSearch API works by balancing precomputed shopping data with live transactions, all entirely performed on Vayant's airfare shopping systems. Guided by the SmartSearch algorithm, the SmartSearch Business Rules Engine detects whether to pull results from a precomputed shopping system or to perform a query on the live systems. The logic of live versus precomputed shopping is determined by the customer. Search times vary from milliseconds when precomputed data is used to a few seconds when live.

With this solution, airlines and travel agencies can provide metasearch partners with custom high-accuracy shopping API and modify the pricing and shopping logic per partner. They can also use SmartSearch to power transaction-intensive applications such as map price offers, a full year calendar display of prices, up-to date banner offers and promo links in social media, web and mobile apps - all without touching their GDS or host.

Eric Dumas, the company's CEO, said: "We have identified look-to-book ratios as a core industry challenge. SmartSearch solves it by providing very high shopping accuracy, sub-second speed and optimised business model. Only precomputed shopping allows airlines and travel agencies to forget about look-to-book ratios, improve their relationships with metasearch companies and also inspire online shoppers."

For further information see www.vayant.com

puzzlesolutions

Crossword:

Across: 1. HERTZ, 5. BDA, 7. BUCHAREST, 8. GOA, 9. TUSCANY, 11. SANDALS, 13. IOW, 14. MELBOURNE, 16. SAA, 17. KLASS.
Down: 1. HUNGER GAMES, 2. RABAT, 3. ZAC, 4. GRANADA, 5. BEENY, 6. ALTON TOWERS, 10. SAN JOSE, 11. SALSA, 12. SIENA, 15. REK.

Highlighted Word: RUSSIA

Travagrams: (top) Visions Holiday Group

(bottom) Larnaka

Where Am I?: Cardamon Mountains

Boracay

Asia's 24/7 island



Experience blue water, white sand, and rainbow sunsets in the world's party paradise.



Getting There:

Accessible via air from international gateways Manila, Cebu, Davao, Clark, Singapore and Hong Kong



More Things to Do:

- Shop for island souvenirs at the Talipapa and D'Mall.
- Go cliff diving and barbecuing at Ariel's Point.
- Get an authentic hilot or Filipino massage on the shore.
- Catch the sunset on a paraw or local sailboat.
- Enjoy a game of beach volleyball on the powdery white sand.



THE ONLY SOUND
YOU WILL HEAR
*IS THE POUNDING
in your chest.*



When these huge and graceful ghosts glide towards you over alien terrain, you'll know. You are a stranger in a strange land. Calm. For now. But make no mistake: These are the kings of this arctic jungle. A close encounter with them stays with you long after the adrenaline is gone.

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CANADA'S HEART  BEATS