



Cruise Weekly today

Cruise Weekly today features three pages of all the latest cruise industry news including a special feature from PlanPay.

Uniworld flash sale

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruise Collection has announced a flash sale, with savings on many sailings later this year.

The cruise line reported an unusual theme from the past two months, with 30% of its bookings being for sailings departing later this year.

Managing Director Alice Ager said Uniworld has never seen this level of last-minute booking activity this late in the season in the Aussie market.

The flash sale offers value on space remaining on some of Uniworld's most popular itineraries - [CLICK HERE](#).

Heritage Expeditions US acquisition

CHRISTCHURCH-BASED Heritage Expeditions is involved in a takeover of Vantage Travel Services, a Boston-headquartered tour and cruise company which declared bankruptcy last week.

A notice on the Vantage website announced "United Travel Pte Ltd, an affiliate of Nordic Hamburg and Heritage Expeditions, has agreed to acquire Vantage's assets and provide customers with future opportunities for the travel experiences and the luxury service they have come to expect".

A Chapter 11 filing seeks to expedite the sale promptly, with Singapore-based United Travel to pay UDS\$1 million for Vantage's business assets, while also providing conditional credits to clients who had made payments for trips before 11 May if they book a tour with the purchaser.

Vantage operated two



expedition ships year-round, the *Ocean Explorer* (pictured) and *Ocean Odyssey*, both of which are part of the series manufactured by Sunstone in China which also includes Aurora Expeditions' *Greg Mortimer* and *Sylvia Earle* and the recently launched *Ocean Albatros* and *Ocean Victory* operated by Albatros Expeditions.

The acquiring entity, United Travel, is owned by ship management firm Nordic

Hamburg, which is also believed to provide vessel management services for Heritage Expeditions' *Heritage Adventurer*.

Vantage was founded in 1983 as a specialist American operator of trips to Australia and New Zealand, particularly focusing on affinity groups including banks, teachers, and alumni associations.

It expanded into a consumer-facing brand some years later, also adding river cruise operations in Europe before in 2021 taking delivery of the first of its Sunstone expedition vessels.

The business is believed to have been trading well until Apr this year when it was hit by a ransomware attack, leading to the subsequent cancellation of several departures.

Heritage wasn't able to comment on the deal before **Cruise Weekly's** deadline today.

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Monday 3rd July 2023

Content produced in collaboration with PlanPay

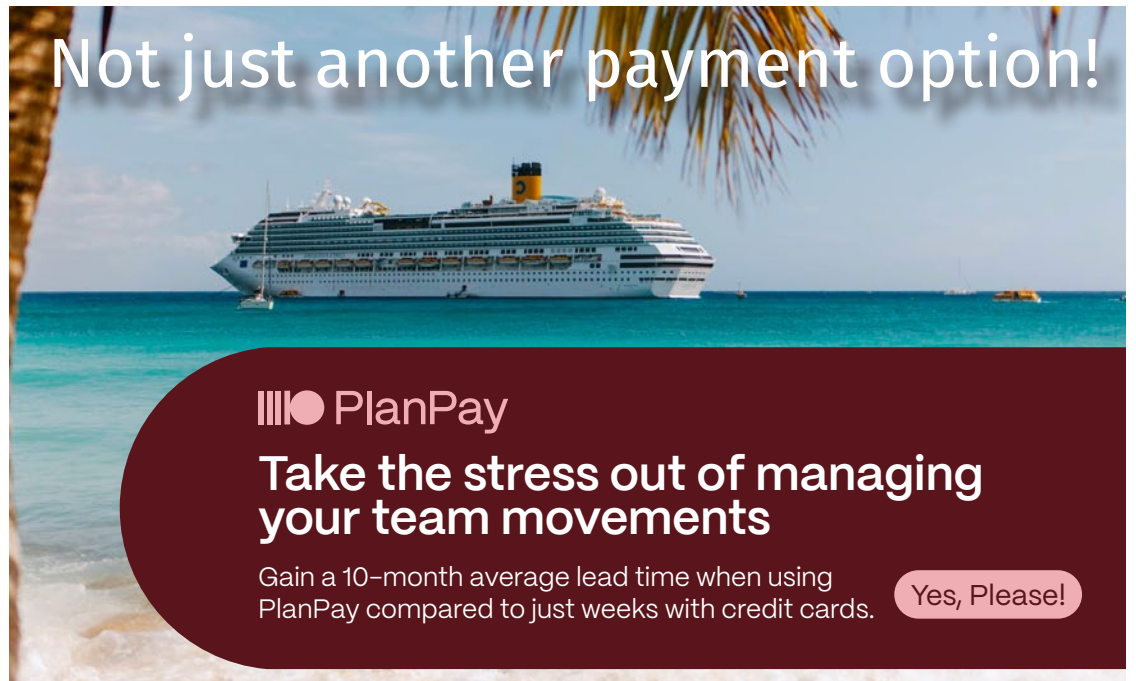
IN THE cruise industry, staying ahead of the game requires constant evolution to meet customers' ever-changing needs.

The growing trend towards instalment-based payments and the number of payment options emerging over the past decade is reshaping consumers' online and offline purchasing.

When scanning the current payment options in market, PlanPay stands out as something really quite different.

Developed for the travel industry, PlanPay offers a digitised layby platform that doesn't rely on credit facilities to enable instalment-based payments.

Instead, it allows customers to split the cost of a trip into upfront payments using their own money and completing the plan before they travel, avoiding the



Not just another payment option!

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inevitable financial hangover that often ruins the post-holiday glow.

Operating in both ecommerce and agent assisted environments, PlanPay provides an astounding level of flexibility.

Managing payment plans up to two years in advance, customers can choose to pay in weekly, fortnightly or monthly instalments and keep track of their progress in the PlanPay customer portal.

PlanPay's competitive advantage

PLANPAY has a track record with cruise enthusiasts, having so far facilitated over 2,500 voyages for customers.

The biggest advantage of incorporating PlanPay into your payment strategy this year is the extended booking lead time.

The average PlanPay cruise customer books up to 65 weeks in advance and pays just \$37 a week in the lead-up to their trip.

The upfront instalment option reduces the financial barrier

to making a booking and the small instalment amounts make upgrading and adding those onboard extras just too enticing to resist.

In fact, 41% of customers surveyed said they would upgrade their booking if upfront instalments were an option.

So, what are you waiting for? Get in touch with the PlanPay team and get a demo of how it can transform your bookings this year.

Removing barriers to booking

BY INTRODUCING PlanPay, cruise lines can significantly increase conversion rates by removing financial barriers to booking and providing payment optionality to suit every budget.

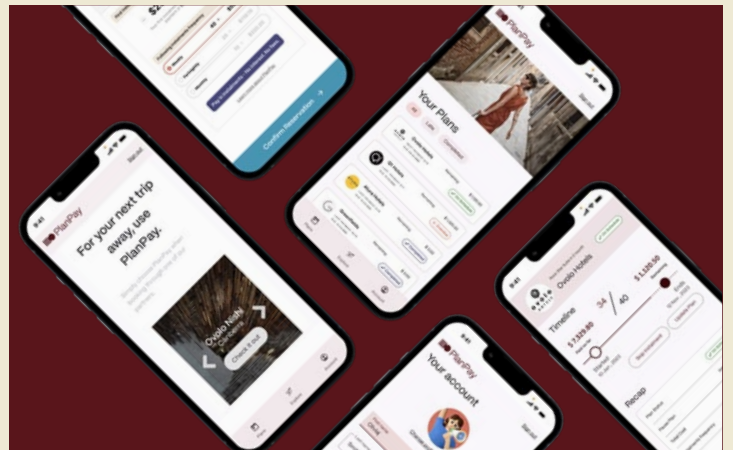
This not only attracts new customer segments, including budget-conscious passengers and those with irregular incomes, but also increases the average spend per customer by breaking down upgrades and onboard activities into just a few dollars a week.

PlanPay also provides a competitive advantage to cruise

agents, positioning them as industry-leaders who attract customers who value both convenience and flexibility.

The seamless integration of PlanPay into ecommerce checkouts or utilising the standalone integration-free agent checkout drives growth, all while maintaining merchant policies.

Conditions and cancellation policies can be set within the platform and the customer-centric design means passengers can easily see where they stand.



PlanPay

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A LATIN proverb observes “when in Rome, do as the Romans do”, and to comply with this, Uber is launching ‘The Boat’ in Mykonos.

The groundbreaking service will be available for residents and visitors, allowing them to hail a motorboat with the touch of a button via the Uber application.

Up to eight people will be able to “Uber Pool” in one of the boats, which will be available during the peak season of late Jun to Oct.



Azamara savings

AZAMARA Circle members can double their savings with 20% off select sailings for a limited time.

This offer can also be combined with select sailings on Azamara’s current brand offer, giving up to USD\$600 onboard credit.

It is available on select sailings booked between 01 and 14 Jul.

CLICK HERE for more information.

Pavlidis’ new TA role



TRAVEL Associates (TA) has invested in a dedicated Cruise Manager, Kathy Pavlidis (pictured) long-time leader of its Cruise Boutique location in Kew (CW breaking news Fri).

The new role will work closely with TA’s cruise partners, with Pavlidis to use her strong connections within, and passion for the cruise industry to own and manage the company’s cruise groups division.

Reporting to the Head of Product Adam Townson, Pavlidis will drive strategy alongside TA’s luxury cruise partners.

She will also work to continually upskill TA’s advisor network, growing its expertise, as well as its training opportunities with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), with each of the company’s offices to become a member of the organisation.

Pavlidis is a previous winner of CLIA’s Consultant of the Year award, which TA said made her an obvious choice for the position.

“Kathy is a champion of the

luxury cruise market and we cannot wait for her to start working in the Product team,” TA said.

Pavlidis will continue to be based in Melbourne, and will commence her new role today.

Strachan on Fred

FRED. Olsen Cruise Lines will welcome English television presenter Michaela Strachan on board a cruise to Greenland and Iceland with *Borealis*.

Next month’s four-night cruise on the ‘Exploring Rugged & Remote Greenland and Iceland’ will see Strachan deliver a talk on British wildlife.

She will also be joined by the *Borealis*’ Entertainment Manager on stage to answer questions in Fred. Olsen’s ‘Audience With’ program, including a Q&A session with guests.

To view the itinerary, **CLICK HERE.**

HAL sales event

HOLLAND America Line’s (HAL) Unforgettable Journeys Event brings more experiences and significant savings for guests.

The event gives guests top-selling amenities at 50% off, and adds gratuities to its Have It All premium package, for eligible spring 2023 through autumn 2024 cruises.

Running through until the end of the month, the Unforgettable Journeys Event also features 50% reduced deposits.

For more information, call 1300 987 322.

Travelmarvel 2024

TRAVELMARVEL’S latest Canada & Alaska 2024 range is on sale now.

The tour operator’s most popular itinerary is the 21-day Reflections of the Rockies & Alaska Cruise, which is priced from \$10,595 per person twin share, with a saving of \$2,000 per couple.

Guests spend 14 days touring the Rockies from Victoria, via Whistler, Blue River, Jasper, Lake Louise, Banff and Vancouver, including a Rocky Mountaineer rail journey.

Guests then spend seven nights cruising Alaska’s Inside Passage aboard a Holland America Line ship.

Book early and enjoy savings of up to \$2,400 per couple by the end of Nov, as well as an extra \$600 per person.

Call Travelmarvel on 1300 300 036.