



RCC trials Groupon for one-night sale

Royal Caribbean has seen great success with a recent online promotion, selling out its allocation of cabins in one day.

AUSTRALIA'S leading group buying website, Groupon (*Telsyte Group Buying Market Study*), has reported its strongest cruise sales with a popular offer by Royal Caribbean.

Earlier this month RCC used the "daily deal" service to promote the inaugural local sailing of *Voyager of the Seas*: an overnight "cruise to nowhere".

The fare was slashed by 56% to \$249 ppts, which saw all 200 balcony cabins sold in 23 hours.

The following week, RCC provided a further allocation of 120 cabins for \$299 ppts, also selling out in 16 hours.

Allison Brennan, the newly appointed public relations manager for Royal Caribbean Cruises Limited Australia and New Zealand, said the company was approached by Groupon several

months ago to consider using its new travel arm, Groupon Travel, for selling cruises.

"With coupon websites growing rapidly in the Australian market, we thought it would be an excellent opportunity to showcase our cruises to a brand new audience," Brennan said.

"We decided to trial the concept with our *Voyager of the Seas* one-night sampler cruise, departing Sydney on November 23."

According to Brennan, the deal attracted a "great response" from consumers and RCC would continue to use Groupon.

"We continually look for opportunities to introduce cruising to new consumers," she said.

"The use of Groupon and other such organisations forms part of this strategy."

Brennan also told *CW* that Groupon Travel was not a threat to travel agents' business.

"As the nature of Groupon and similar sites is to offer a one-off discounted product, consumers did receive an exclusive deal on our one-night sampler cruise.

"This is our common practice with Australian travel agents who similarly receive access to exclusive offers on a large number of our cruises.

"Given the huge response to the promotion of this one-night sampler cruise, we would encourage all agents to start promoting this unique cruise on *Voyager of the Seas*, and a similar one-night cruise on *Celebrity Solstice*."

Lisa Maroun, managing director of Groupon Travel, said: "Following requests from our subscribers for a local cruise deal we decided to partner with one of the biggest cruise companies in the world, RCC, to launch our first offer which sold out in record time".

"Groupon Travel will continue to diversify its product range in order to offer new travel experiences to our loyal subscribers," Maroun added.

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Brett Jardine - General Manager, ICCA

Cruise Conference Opportunities

As the Australasian cruise industry continues to grow, it is important that our level of knowledge and in-depth understanding of this global industry also grows.

An opportunity for everyone who has a thirst for more cruise knowledge is attendance at the upcoming Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific conference in Singapore (17th and 18th September).

Held at Singapore's new Marina Bay Cruise Centre, the event will include a tradeshow and conference programme focused on Asia-Pacific destinations, itinerary planning, shore excursion services, port and terminal development as well as ship operations, ship services and hotel operations.

Whilst the role of most cruise industry experts in our market is primarily focused on sales and marketing to the consumer, this event may be an opportunity for you to understand how a cruise itinerary is planned long before the brochure is printed.

Want to know more? Have a look at www.cruiseshippingevents.com and click on the Asia tab.

Whilst on the subject of cruise conferences, those interested in attending Cruise360 as part of an ICCA delegation in 2013 can pre-register their interest now.

Cruise360 is a great event that is focused on front line consultants who see themselves as cruise specialists.

Hosted by our sister association in North America (CLIA) the event will be returning to Vancouver in 2013 and run from 18-23 June.

For more details visit our home page www.cruising.org.au and click on the Cruise360 tab.

Island Escape discounts

ISLAND Escape Cruises has released an industry deal which gives agents access to reduced rates for the company's six-night Discovery Vanuatu voyages departing 05, 12 and 19 Aug 2012.

The deal offers reduced rates of \$500pp/ts.

Cruise Shipping shifts to new venue

This year's Asia-Pacific conference will be held in the world's newest cruise terminal, the Marina Bay Cruise Centre Singapore.

DELEGATES attending the Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific tradeshow and conference are set to get a first look at Singapore's "ultra modern" terminal, which welcomed its first ship, *Voyager of the Seas*, less than two months ago.

UBM Live's Cruise Shipping portfolio announced the new venue for the second annual event, taking place 17-18 Sep 2012, as a sign that the conference was "evolving".

Held last year at the Marina Bay Expo Centre in Singapore, CS-AP will again bring together the global cruise industry in the rapidly growing Asian marketplace.

This year's venue, the Marina Bay Cruise Centre Singapore, is designed to host the largest ships currently being developed.

"The opportunity to have Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific in one of the world's newest and largest terminals is thrilling," said Daniel Read, portfolio director of Cruise Shipping.

"Having a unique perspective of one of Asia's largest cruise terminals, while also discussing modern key pressure points and opportunities for the industry, is certainly going to produce a ground-breaking event."

Read said the buzz surrounding the two-day show was "already tremendously enthusiastic".

The exhibition will feature destinations, itinerary planning, shore excursion services, port and terminal development, ship operations, ship services and hotel operations.

Social programs, travel agent training, and business matching opportunities will also be conducted at the event, which is supported by the International Cruise Council Australia.

Melvin Vu, ceo of SATS-Creuers Cruise Services, terminal operator for the MBCCS, said: "I am sure delegates, exhibitors and visitors will find our venue a conducive place to network and share knowledge and information."

For details **CLICK HERE**.

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WINDSTAR'S new 124-page 2013 'Voyage Collection' brochure features 7 new itineraries, including: Europe's West Coast Odyssey, Idyllic British Isles, Gaelic Explorers, Scandinavian Tapestry, Provence & Cote d'Azur, Footsteps of Faith, and Casablanca & the Canary Islands. See www.windstarcruises.com.

\$2000 Orion agent incentive

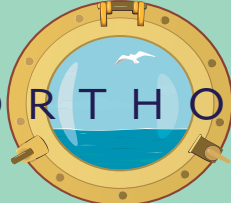
AGENTS will score themselves a \$2,000 cash incentive for every twin share booking they make, between 23 Jul and 10 Sep, onboard one of *Orion's* remaining Kimberley 2012 voyages, courtesy of Orion Expedition Cruises. The huge cash incentive can be used in any way the agent wishes, such as adding value to the client, or as a way to splash out on a warm winter wardrobe. In addition, the incentive is on top of Orion's regular commission rates, and every booking will also score agents an entry into the draw to win an *Orion* Antarctica cruise in an Owner's Suite over Christmas 2012 valued at over \$72,000. To sweeten the lure of the Kimberley for consumers, Orion is offering savings of up to 20% off published the fare, plus a free Bungle flight, with fares from A\$8,980pp/ts.

Costa's black box delays

THE preliminary hearing into the *Costa Concordia* disaster has been delayed until 15 Oct by an Italian Court. Previously scheduled to kick-off this week, the hearing has been postponed due to delays in analysing evidence from the vessel's black box recorder.

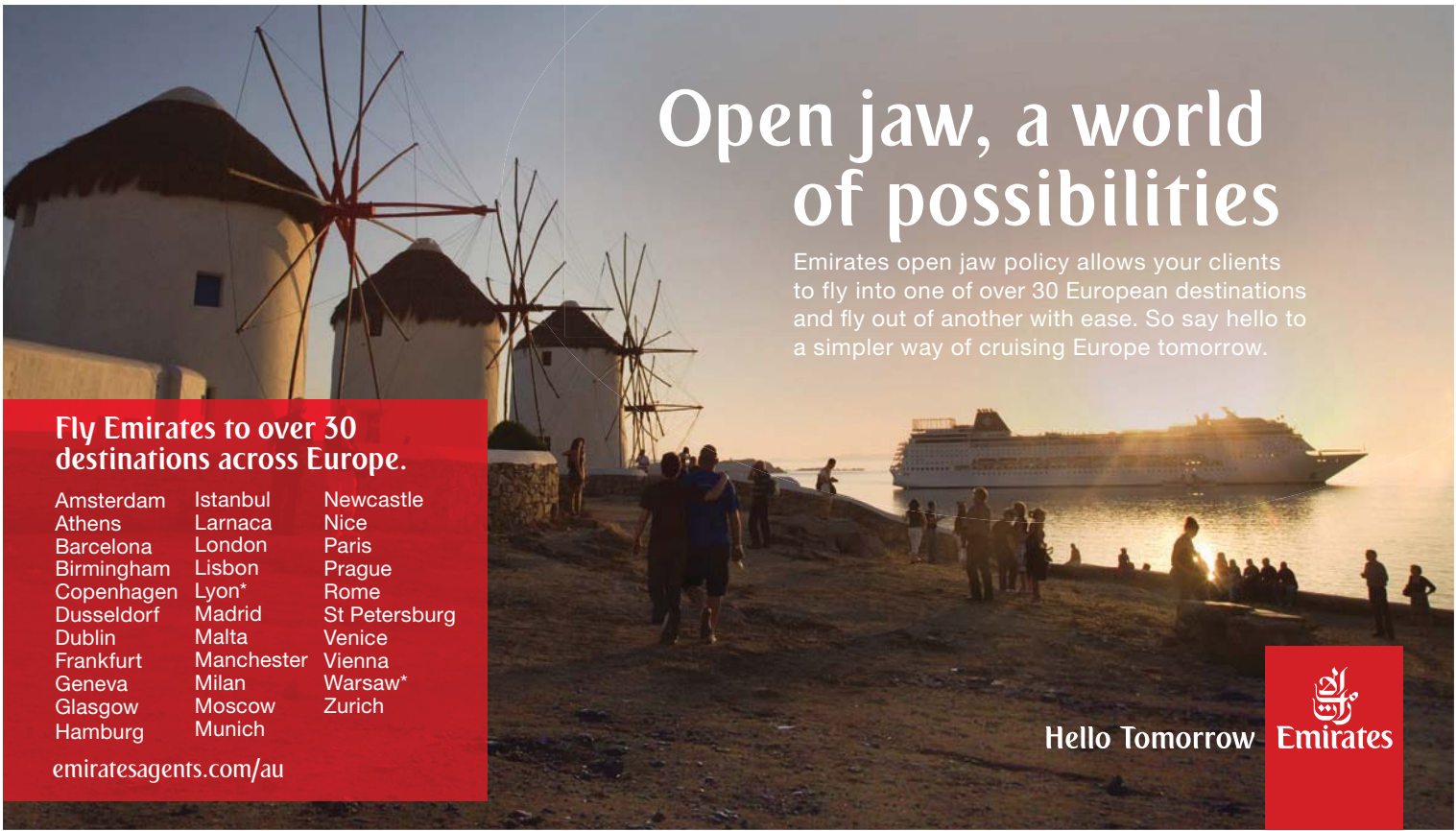
Venice to ban big ships?

AN Italian Government environmental committee is currently reviewing a bill which would give the Venetian City Council power over the city's surrounding waters, a move which could spell the end to larger ships stopping at the iconic city. The bill follows a recommendation by UNESCO which called on Italian authorities to ban large ships from entering the San Marco basin and Giudeccia canal due to the environmental damage that they cause. "The wash churned up by the ships is hollowing out the seabed and gradually turning the lagoon into an inlet of the Adriatic," said UNESCO's Angelo Marzollo. In March the Italian Govt banned vessels over 40,000-tones from coming close to the Doge's Palace, however this will not come into force until there is an "alternative solution".



P O R T H O L E

YOU can take the animal out of the ocean, but its ocean instincts still remain. Guests onboard cruises are thrilled when they get a glimpse of a whale, and even more ecstatic when the whale hangs around for a while, giving them ample opportunity to photograph the magnificent creature in its own playground. Attendees at SeaWorld in San Diego however got a whole new glimpse into the power of these great sea creatures, when the killer whale Kasatka seemingly turned on her trainer during a performance, after hearing a distress cry from her calf which was located away from her in another pool. Unable to get to her calf, wild-born Kasatka pulled her trainer underwater for several minutes at a time, before taking him to the surface for air. Fortunately the trainer managed to escape, having remarkably kept cool and controlled during the incident.




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Olympic yachting discounts

SUNSAIL is offering Olympic discounts for all bookings taken between 27 Jul and 12 Aug.

The deal is applicable for bookings of seven-nights in the Med and five-nights in all other destinations, and offers 5% off yacht charters.

To take advantage of the deal the source code GOAUS must be quoted.

Orion kicks off campaign

ORION Expedition Cruises is upping its visibility by taking out 26 adverts in the Travel & Leisure section of the nationally distributed *Weekend Australian*.

According to Orion, the ongoing campaign is aimed at "connecting intellectually and emotionally with readers interested in travel beyond the predictable", and will focus on voyages in Borneo, Antarctica, PNG, NZ and Melanesia.

Equinox crew member arrest

A CREW member onboard *Celebrity Equinox* was arrested at the Italian port of Messina last week for allegedly attacking a passenger.

According to reports, the crew member had been drinking with the guest in one of the vessel's bars before following her to her room where the alleged attack occurred.

The 11-night cruise had departed from Civitavecchia the day before the arrest.

Speaking in the wake of the arrest the cruise line told media that it is "liaising with the relevant authorities".



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Americans return to Costa

LAST month Costa Cruises enjoyed its highest North American sales this year, and clocked a 32% rise in bookings compared to Jun 2011.

"Our recovery is well under way, and we are ahead of where we expected to be at this point in 2012," said Scott Knutson, vp of sales and marketing for Costa Cruises North America.

"While effective marketing and strategic pricing have played a part in generating our strong bookings, we believe that they also are a result of increased consumer interest and renewed confidence in the Costa brand," he added.

TravelManager success

TRAVELMANAGERS' personal travel manager, Wilson Young, is basking in the glow of an impressive one-day cruise fair debut which he hosted for over 180 people at the Perth Cultural Centre's State Library Theatre.

Pictured below addressing attendees at the fair, Young's entrepreneurial flair was supported by 16 cruise suppliers who jumped on board to educate and entertain guests at the event.

"It was a great way to establish myself and make people aware I am here to help and that I'm an expert in cruising," he said.

"It was so successful I might even run another one before next year!," he added.





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