

Hospitality: "vital to wider industry"

THE hospitality sector is critical to the success of the wider industry, Tourism Minister Mark Burton said at Pacific International Hotel Management School's 10th anniversary.

"Tourism's continued success rests in no small part with the interactions the hospitality sector has with our visitors."

He added: "By continually raising the quality of the service we provide, New Zealand's tourism industry will, I am confident, continue to flourish, in an extremely competitive global market."

The Tourism Workforce and Skills Projections report identified a need for 31,000 extra people to meet demand between now and 2010. On current trends, a further 89,000 people are also needed, he added. Finding suitably skilled employees to fill these positions will be a challenge. Industry and government are working on a strategy to address these challenges. "But challenges aside, this is good news for the students here, as there are clearly ongoing career opportunities for highly skilled people in this industry," the Minister said.

We need to watch the Aussies closely!

WE should be seriously concerned about Australia's success with its latest campaign, *A Different Light*.

Trans Tasman consultant Dain Simpson of The Portage, Marlborough, says New Zealand has to watch the Australians carefully.

"Sure, they lost a lot of momentum with SARS and other issues and Japan has still not recovered. But the rest of their markets are looking good!"

He says Australia's German, UK and US markets are improving considerably.

"I think they will do very well with this campaign. And they now have a lot of money. So New Zealand should watch very closely how far it is maintaining its competitive edge. Then it needs to decide what to do, whether it's more emphasis on food or soft experiences - because at the end of the day only so many people will jump off a bridge or climb a mountain."

Mr Simpson says that many visitors

to New Zealand want less dramatic experiences "small experiences rather than large group things..."

He adds: "People now want to go back home and boast that they have done something no one else has done but not necessarily exotic or dramatic. It's just something the guy next door didn't do when he was there."

Today's visitors want to study dolphins from small boats in the Marlborough Sounds, where quality tours are run by marine biologists who treat their clients one-to-one, rather than on a trip where 250 people are watching at the same time.

Mr Simpson says Marlborough is doing well in attracting international visitors.

It is now the sixth most popular New Zealand destination, with 43.5 percent of all visitors coming from abroad. But the domestic market is stagnant.

Don't we then need a domestic campaign? "What will it do?" he replies. "See if it's worked in Australia as they have been doing it for three years there and I don't see any growth. All they have done is stop the market disappearing." Mr Simpson, who spends much of his time in Australia, says there's only domestic growth in Australia of about 1.5 percent - well below the population growth. **(over)**

TEN years ago in IT...

NEWS that Taranaki coach operator Witha Truck has gone into receivership underscores warnings that it should be cash upfront when dealing with North Asian markets.

Bus and Coach Association director John Collyns says the company is owed \$250,000. Companies must also charge realistic rates.

WORLD Travel and Tourism Council director of environmental research Andrew Blaza will speak at next month's tourism convention, it's just been announced.

He'll discuss how good environmental practices can improve the bottom line and how local government can negotiate with community and industry on acceptable effects of tourism.

Newly-formed Tourism Wellington will discuss their hopes by ignoring local authority boundaries. And Waikato RTO Paul Watkins will give Heartland's experience in doing just that.

THERE'S been a 14 percent downturn in the number of Germans staying in Budget Backpacker Hostels.

CDL Hotels, which has 21 properties here, may have to cancel bookings due to a projected shortage of beds between September and April, according to MD Vincent Yeo.

DAVID Campbell has become NZTIA's man in Auckland.

WE'RE a people industry where service is paramount. But are we letting ourselves down through the increased use of answerphones and personal voicemail? How prevalent is the practice of not returning calls or answering letter or faxes? *IT* launched a survey this week asking these questions.

COMPANIES should not feel excluded from aspiring to The New Zealand Way branding, says marketing executive Lisa Marquet.

A new three day coastal track south of Kaikoura has attracted 500 trampers in the first six months.

We need to watch the Aussies closely!

(from pg1) For the same reason, he believes we will go through a period of decline domestically. "You only have to look at the outbound figures for the last two years, fare structures for the Pacific and on the Tasman for that, even though the tax content of fares can now be more than 100 percent."

Mr Simpson says New Zealand also has to monitor the strength of its own dollar, which is almost on par with Australia's and is gaining against a weakening Euro. "Then there's low unemployment. The environment tax will be a problem, too. How much it will affect us we have yet to find out. But the big worry is the Australian campaign which appears to be doing extremely well..."

TA sets ambitious target

TOURISM Australia (TA) has set a goal of A\$22,100 million in international visitor spend by 2007/2008 - an increase of more than 25 percent on the figures achieved in 2003/2004.

The targets are over and above the forecasts made by the Tourism Forecasting Committee of A\$21,200 million and are designed to provide a focus for the NTO's engagement with the industry to increase the economic dividend from tourism as their primary objective.

"We need to focus on increasing the total spend of our visitors from our markets, rather than just growing numbers of international travellers," says TA MD Scott Morrison.

"A more profitable industry is the key to a more sustainable industry. Tourism currently employs more than 500,000 Australians and we want to see those jobs secured for today and grow in the future."

Qantas to fly Beijing direct

QANTAS has announced that from January 9 it will launch three weekly services between Sydney and Beijing. It expects to fly daily between Australia and Beijing/Shanghai within two years.

QF and TA in A\$60M partnership

QANTAS and Tourism Australia are in a new A\$60 million global destination marketing partnership.

Tourism Australia MD Scott Morrison says: "As our national carrier, Qantas is an airline that genuinely does call Australia home and shares Tourism Australia's goal of increasing international demand for Australian tourism experiences. Our new partnership is based on continuing this commitment through joint investment in cooperative campaigns in addition to other activities such as supporting our visiting journalist programme and major events such as ATE and Dreamtime."

The partnership will see TA and Qantas work together in the UK, US, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Japan, India and here.

Plans to boost domestic

“OUR challenge domestically is to unlock the size of the overall domestic market and increase the amount of leave taken by Australians and ensure Australia is in their consideration set of preferred holiday destinations, particularly higher yield visitors, who are highly pre-disposed to travel overseas,” says Tourism Australia in its just released corporate strategy.

It plans to do this by: maximising competitiveness; targeting the ideal visitor; affirming brand perception; increasing brand salience; realising segment and market opportunities; ensuring effectiveness and engaging stakeholders.

The ideal market is described as being a large and global segment common to all major source markets. “It spans a core of defined socio-demographic and psychographic segments and comprises a dominant and growing share of our business. We must understand them...and target the bulk of our global marketing effort towards them,” it adds.

Aussie latest on China...

CHINA is expected to approve its 100th ADS destination by the end of the year, according to Tourism Australia (TA).

The NTO says 47.2 percent of a travel portal’s 3,000 members say they would consider travelling individually on overseas trips, instead of in groups. This is 10 percent more than last year.

*** CNTA has approved an extra 144 travel agents as outbound operators.**

*** Some European countries have experienced high numbers of absconders among Chinese visitors. Some 150 tourists from eastern China have been refused visas during the May Day holidays and at the same time Shanghai ADS agents had to close in May and June.**

*** A survey shows that 99 percent of Mainland Chinese would like to visit Taiwan. With Singapore opening a casino that island state will become popular too**



Legally speaking - with Brookfields Lawyers

THE recent media focus on the Resource Management Act and its ‘high’ compliance costs overlooks the major benefit of the legislation. It aims to ensure the sustainability of resources through careful management and planning.

This is a major advantage for our tourism industry, as surveys show it to be heavily dependent on the beauty of the natural environment.

The RMA is ‘effects based’ - in other words, it is concerned with the effects of an activity on the environment (both natural and built). All projects requiring consent must be considered in the light of potential adverse effects.

Examples of these considerations can include:

- * increased traffic and noise having adverse effects on amenity values (a recent example is the proposal to host V8 car racing in central city streets);
- * noise from entertainment venues or activities (the Auckland Viaduct is a well known tourism area that mixes residential and entertainment activities, where noise has generated numerous complaints);
- * the effect of large-scale visitor accommodation in residential areas;
- * the impact of large numbers of visitors on natural environments;
- * the impact of large numbers of visitors on the cultural and social values of a community - especially a small community with close ties;
- * matters of national importance.

Balance

Many of the decisions from the Environment Court show the difficulty in balancing these issues. For example, in *Kemp v Queenstown Lakes District Council* the court upheld the refusal of consent for a commercial kayaking/inflatable canoe operation, as it considered that there would be an adverse cumulative effect on the safety of river users resulting from the addition of 15 kayaks for one trip per day.

Scrutiny

Coastal environments in particular come in for intense scrutiny. In *Kalkman v Thames-Coromandel District Council* consent had been granted for the construction of a five-unit travellers’ accommodation complex at Paparoa. On appeal the court said that the cumulative effect of the non-complying activity (and its associated earthworks, buildings and activities) was inconsistent with the preservation of the coastal environment and was inappropriate in terms of s6(a) of the RMA.

The recent Cape Kidnappers decision, an extremely carefully planned and landscaped tourism lodge and chalet development, was knocked back as it was considered that the adverse effects of any development on such an iconic landscape of national importance could not be sufficiently mitigated.

Overlooked

What is often overlooked is that many tourism-related activities are supported by the local authorities that are charged with the implementation of the RMA. This is often the result of effective communication between councils, applicants for consent, and communities, all of which recognise the benefits of the industry to local economies.

We act for a number of councils and private operators in the tourism/hospitality industry. In our experience, successful projects come from successful and well managed partnerships.

For more information please contact Andrew Green, Partner, green@brookfields.co.nz.



Investing in tourism - the value of experiential products

By Bancorp MD Craig Brownie

INVESTMENT in experiential tourism is vital for the growth of New Zealand tourism companies and I urge you to consider making the transition - from private to public.

With millions of visitors forecast to visit New Zealand, spending around \$11,300 million by 2010, one of the main challenges now facing tourism companies is capturing, and capitalising on, this significant growth. New Zealand may be the current “darling” of the world’s travel markets, but increasingly competitive destinations are offering similar tourism products, forcing local operators to provide discerning travellers with something unique - the Kiwi “experience”.

Global

Experiential tourism is an outgrowth of a global movement toward experiential learning, whereby people create meaning through direct experience. Rather than gaining knowledge about Maori cultures by reading about them, one spends time in a Maori community.

This form of tourism is gaining acceptance as New Zealand’s point-of-difference, as we acknowledge that our country cannot continue to rely on dated marketing messages - such as being ‘clean and green’.

Instead, connecting with international visitors on a rational and emotional level will be essential if we are to be top-of-mind when visitors plan their next holiday.

International examples of companies undertaking experiential tourism development include Virgin Atlantic, which now provides its travellers with an enhanced set of experiences in addition to flying, such as hair salons, massages and music rooms in some of its departure lounges.

Another example is the new Airbus A380, which has re-shaped its interior design to include bars and lounge areas to transform the way passengers think about air travel.

Ultimately, “experiential” tourism product planning and development has become vital for long-term company growth- but it does require significant capital.

One mechanism tourism or travel companies should consider for raising funds, expanding and growing, is a share market listing.

Gullivers

In the four months since its listing, Gullivers has experienced a 6.4 percent increase in EBITDA over the forecasts in its original prospectus.

As a strategic advisor and investor in the tourism market Bancorp typically looks for companies that exhibit strong and visionary management with prospects for significant growth.

More often than not listed entities are better investments because they are transparent and it is easier to understand the value of the business - as very few tourism operators are listed in New Zealand this task is not always easy.

Private companies invariably have a multitude of hidden legal, human resources or infrastructural issues that make the task of a merger or acquisition more complicated than it is with a public entity.

Value

Listing also adds significant value to a tourism business by allowing easier access to capital, better corporate governance, and the requirement to meet transparent accounting and reporting standards.

Allowing a wider range of ordinary investors to participate in tourism also means that opportunities to expand and diversify the industry are that much greater, with ownership retained by New Zealanders. A key for tourism is therefore to build on its ability to provide new and desirable “experiences” by encouraging investment and taking opportunities to raise capital through public offerings. If operators can efficiently package and provide ‘experiential’ products then the chances are that the world’s individual travellers will be exposed to something that is consistently unique, leading them to share their positive experience with friends, family and colleagues, and more importantly - return to New Zealand.

BCA alarmed at proposed coach ban

THE Bus and Coach Association is alarmed at the way Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) is moving to introduce a bylaw that would prevent tour coaches using the Crown Range Road.

Deputy executive director Dave Smith says: “We have overwhelming support from our members in the area for the council stepping back from a bylaw change that could have serious consequences for coach operators and local tourist locations.

“There seems to have been a confused approach to the issue.

We are not convinced that the council yet realises the problems it would cause, largely because it has not taken the time to listen to the well-founded views of coach operators and those more indirectly affected. Nor did it properly and fairly notify the extent of the bylaw it now wants to make.” From the time council first considered restricting larger tour coaches it has behaved “in a most inconsistent way. At one early point it even affirmed that coaches would not be affected at all,” he adds. “It is now crystal clear that buses and coaches are indeed affected and the council’s officers have stated as much publicly.”

Get the willies in Oamaru!

THE Poltergeists of the Precinct is the aptly named title of Oamaru's latest visitor experience.

While they are suitable for all ages, we are told they are not for the faint-hearted and a good night's sleep cannot be guaranteed afterwards.

They are similar to Dunedin's Hair Raiser Tours which have been going three years.

Unique to Oamaru are behind-the-scenes tours at the Blue Penguin Colony. Visitors are taken in small groups to learn about the colony's monitoring and welfare programme - with an opportunity to view penguins up close in a specifically designed penguin-friendly viewing facility.

* Southern Soaring is New Zealand's main commercial gliding operation. The company provides a variety of experiences - from 20 minute glider flights, to epic trips over the summit of Mount Cook. It has a fleet of

modern two-seat gliders and provides an aviation adventure. This is said to be the only place in the world where tourists can fly in modern, two-seat gliders with top pilots.

You are not alone...

LATEST to subscribe to *IT*: Langham Hotel, Auckland; Comvita Visitor Centre, Te Puke; Maori Tours Kaikoura; Waipoua Lodge, Dargaville; Magic Memories, Queenstown; Hill and Knowlton, Auckland; Pacific Journeys (NZ) Ltd., Auckland; Marlborough Marketing; Totara Estate, Oamaru; Emerald Tourism, Takapuna. Welcome all. You are not alone...

Cool website

SKIERS and snowboarders planning a trip to Lake Wanaka can use a new 'one-stop-shop' website: www.skilakewanaka.com.

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Director of International Sales - Australia and New Zealand

Grand Hotels International is seeking applicants with extensive sales experience in the hospitality sector to manage the overall procurement of business from all International/Inbound, Leisure and Tourism Markets for all Grand Hotels International properties located in Australia and New Zealand.

We require a strong leader to make decisions in conjunction with the Hotels in relation to the Inbound/International market, a comprehensive knowledge of the hotel industry sales and marketing functions, the ability to effectively plan and implement a concentrated Sales & Marketing plan for both New Zealand and Australia, computer literacy with particular emphasis on data base systems. The ideal candidate will be highly organised, proactive, have attention to detail, an effective negotiator with excellent communication skills and the ability to travel through Australasia is required. This position could be based in Auckland or Wellington. We offer a salary package of \$70,000 and company car.

If you know you have the skills and capabilities to contribute to the success of our hotels, please forward your CV to:

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Kennedy expects good season ...

PASSENGER aircraft circling out of the cloud and easing down over the jagged snowy peaks around Queenstown mean a happy winter.

The Wakatipu is quarantined from any national feeling of gloom and doom, according to Destination Queenstown CEO David Kennedy.

“Bookings for airlines and the wholesalers are strong,” he says. “So far, figures are matching those of last year’s successful season.”

Travellers and holidaymakers booking on the Web make life difficult for those who are trying to track trends, but Mr Kennedy is happy with what he sees.

The nine flights a week from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane boost this case. “We are still price competitive with Australia, which is a major market,” he says.

Stragglers remnants of the much-touted Barmy Army of rugby supporters have made it to Queenstown, with fleets of campervans lined up throughout the region, evidence that the foreign dollars are being spent.

But some shopkeepers worried

QUEENSTOWN shopkeepers are blaming “low brow” visitors for a retail downturn, claiming quality tourists are no longer visiting the resort in such numbers. Ruby Rock and Pearl Centre has closed and owner Remy Bouche - who introduced the Tahitian black pearl in 1992 - says there are more tourists but they’re not spending as much.

DQ targets 31% increase

DESTINATION Queenstown’s new three-year marketing plan is targeting a 30.6 percent increase in international visitor nights to 1,885,000 and a 4.9 percent increase in domestic nights to 1,593,000. The RTO is also aiming to increase overseas visitor spend by \$79 a day to \$615 and by \$70 a day for New Zealand visitors, taking their average daily spend to \$340.

Stone TNZ chairman for second term

WALLY Stone has been confirmed as chairman of TNZ for a second three year period.

ADVERT

Kaikoura Winery

UNIQUE COASTAL LOCATION

Perched high on a cliff edge overlooking South Bay Kaikoura, with a panoramic view of the vast Pacific Ocean, the Kaikoura Winery tourist facility looks out over a playground of whales, dolphins and abundant bird life; a backdrop of majestic mountains, snow capped for much of the year, rise above the vineyard.

Large windows and extensive decking provide a truly close to nature experience enjoyed by increasing numbers of tourists. The business has operated with the emphasis on wine tourism for over four years, the base has been laid for the next chapter of development.

The concept of a boutique winery could be further developed, perhaps add to this a commercial restaurant catering for the numerous bus tours that pass through Kaikoura daily. Maybe accommodation in a lodge or chalets on the remaining large area of cliff frontage could be added to the mix. The possibilities for development of this unique site are exciting.

The 5.166 hectares of land, vineyard, tasting hall, winery building, underground cellar and business, are offered for sale.

Tenders close at our office 4pm Thursday 28 July 2005.

Inspection visits strictly by appointment with the sole agents.

*Hamish Young
Professionals Blenheim Real Estate MREINZ*

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Sticking together

IT is the glue that hold the industry together, according to Dive! Tutukaka director Jeroen Jongejans. "It is always nice to know what's happening. You...make it more homogenous. We are in the same industry but you are the ones who hold it all together. Without *IT* we would start to lose that cohesion and the industry would be the worse for it. The industry would become more fragmented, hence the glue!"

Greens are 100% cheeky

THE Green Party has used TNZ's 100%Pure campaign in a send up to launch its environmental policy. The party labels New Zealand "5%Pure" quoting NIWA that 95 percent of lowland rivers are now unsafe for swimming or drinking.

Shotover sign second 24 year concession

SHOTOVER Jet has signed an agreement with Queenstown Lakes District Council for a second 24-year monopoly to run trips on the Shotover River.

Jasons shares fully subscribed

JASONS Travel Media has announced that its issue of 7.2 million new shares closed on Monday fully subscribed. Share trading was due to commence on the NZAX yesterday (Thursday).

Says CEO and publisher John Sandford: "We are really thrilled that the share offer has been taken up by a wide spread of new shareholders across the country. Even more exciting for us is that a significant portion of the new shareholders are actually customers."

The company launched its new look website (www.jasons.com) to coincide with the listing.

Mayor to attend DM forum

MARLBOROUGH mayor Alistair Sowman is to attend the Destination Marlborough industry forum at the Yacht Club Hotel, Picton, next Wednesday. DM's five year plan will then be revealed. The event will include a farewell to former marketing manager Tom Humphries, who has left to start his own business - and to welcome new marketing executive Katie Covell. Contact: 03-5775523.

ADVERT

Senior Research Analyst

The Ministry of Tourism is currently undertaking a three-year research project looking at the implications of tourism growth on planning for our national infrastructure. We are looking for an experienced policy analyst or researcher with sound project management skills to oversee the final year of this project.

During the next twelve months, under your guidance, the project will deliver the *New Zealand Tourism Flows Model*, a planning tool for public sector planners and decision-makers. As the Analyst responsible you will manage the contract for the delivery of this product, co-ordinate consultation with stakeholders, and plan and execute its public release.

We are looking for someone who can quickly grasp the technical components of the project and who has the ability to effectively and proactively manage central and local government stakeholders. Experience in inter-government relationship management, contract management and project management is a distinct advantage, and excellent communication, including the ability to build relationships and engage with stakeholders, is a key component of the role. A contextual knowledge of some or all of the areas relating to tourism, local government, infrastructure provisions, tourism data, and GIS systems would be a definite advantage.

This is an exciting opportunity to make a significant contribution to a key development of the knowledge base of the tourism sector and actively integrate it into use by central and local government as well as wider industry bodies.

This position is available as a twelve-month contract to cover a parental leave situation. Applicants seeking a secondment for this period are also invited to apply.

For a job description and application form, please refer to our website:

www.med.govt.nz/about/jobs Applications and CV, quoting vacancy number 05/88 should be emailed to helen.wilson@med.govt.nz no later than 13 July 2005.

National Geographic gets it wrong

GLOBAL magazine National Geographic lists Big Glory Bay, Stewart Island, as one of the worst “degraded estuaries” in the world - much to the surprise of locals.

The June edition features a story on the effects suburban sprawl and chemical-intensive agriculture. According to its “facts” the world’s largest “dead zones” are 70,000 square kilometres of the Baltic Sea; 40,000 square kilometres of the northwestern Black Sea; and 17,000 square kilometres in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Then, in a list of 12 “degraded estuaries” - alongside the Tanshui Estuary, in Taiwan, the Nichupte Lagoon, in Mexico and Guanabara Bay, in Brazil - is Big Glory Bay!

Sanford Ltd farms king salmon and greenshell mussels at Big Glory Bay. Manager Tommy Foggo has written to the magazine asking for an explanation. The bay is set in a national park and enjoys pristine water, he says.

SMEs not making the most of networks

SMALL Northland operators are not making the most of business networks, says Tai Tokerau Tourism Board chairman Alan Dawn in his annual report. He says some operators do not appear to be familiar with each other’s products and services and they therefore lose important opportunities for cross marketing. Even when the board co-ordinated familiarisations for member operators it was still disappointing to see a lack of take-up by operators to network and become familiar with what each has to offer.

Benson-Pope has this feeling...

DOC may be ready to abandon its controversial application for a Nugget Point marine reserve for Otago believes Fisheries Minister David Benson-Pope. He says that nationwide pressure on DoC staffing and the need to focus on “higher priorities” are the main reasons. But, he admits, it’s just a feeling he has...

Hard against the rock

HARD Rock Hotels is said to be interested in building a 10-12-storey hotel under Bob’s Peak, Queenstown. Developer Noel Fitzgerald says he is drawing up plans to develop the town’s first high-rise hotel on land he owns in Brecon St, the site of a mini golf course.

Southland at turning point

THE Southland Tourism Strategy was due to be launched in Invercargill on Wednesday, following a year of planning, research and consultation.

The 10-year strategy is a first for the region and recognises the increasing significance of tourism as a major driver of economic and social development.

Venture Southland tourism and events manager Kate Watkinson said before that the launch was a turning point for Southland tourism.

The industry provides between 10 and 15 percent of the current labour force and contributes \$368 million in visitor expenditure.

ADVERT

Regional Manager - Japan



Reporting to our General Manager - Operations, this position is Tokyo based and has a three year fixed term. This role is responsible for excellence in all aspects of the delivery of our business plan in the Japanese market. This is achieved, in part, through the effective management and leadership of a team of eight.

The successful candidate will have drive and energy and will be fluent in both written and spoken Japanese and English, with sound communication and interpersonal skills. She/he will also have a demonstrable and credible track record in relationship management, the ability to understand strategic direction and operationalise key strategies.

You can obtain a position description for this role from www.tourismnewzealand.com. Please send your CV to Rebecca Donoghue at Tourism New Zealand, PO Box 95, Wellington, New Zealand or by email at rebeccad@tnz.govt.nz before 5.00pm on 8 July 2005.

Holiday park gets Wi-Fi, too

IT may only be a holiday park. But Queenstown's Top 10 Holiday Park "Creeksyde" has for the past five years provided a service which major hotels are only now switching on to: Wi-Fi.

Having just returned from a business trip to Europe, owners Tonnie and Erna Spijkerbosch say it's obvious that New Zealanders are more "logged on" than our northern travelling counterparts - and that the Wi-Fi services will be more used by New Zealanders and Australians than other overseas tourists.

Few European camping grounds appear to have internet facilities - and no wireless sites were spotted. But with the increase in sales of internet capable cellphones, it won't be long before more long haul travellers want Wi-Fi. Creeksyde has the service ready and waiting! Although it has for years provided partial coverage for guests with a wireless card for their computers, the Spijkerbosches are now providing Wi-Fi hotspot coverage over the whole park.

QF's other options

QANTAS CEO Geoff Dixon, speaking on the possibility that his carrier might merge with Singapore Airlines, says SQ isn't the only option. It could also strike a deal with British Airways, Cathay Pacific - or AirNZ. If anything happens Mr Dixon says the Qantas brand will still remain.

Massey dumps courses

MASSEY University's catering, hospitality, tourism and travel programmes in Wellington will be stopped at the end of this year, confirms administrator Alyth Begg.

Ferry in trouble again

THE Interislander ferry Aratere lost power in Tory Channel again last week, and its 54 foot-passengers had to be taken off the boat by bus via the vehicle deck once it arrived in Wellington.

On the move...

TNZ Maori manager **Waimaria Erueti** has joined Te Puia as GM operations.

She is a marine biology graduate who worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, then moved to the Waitangi Fisheries Commission before taking on a business development role for Sealord Fisheries in Nelson.

Her passion for fencing - the sport, not the farming pursuit - led her to six years in Italy as a New Zealand representative, where she also did contract work for the then TRADENZ, along with PR work for a commercial client. At Te Puia Ms Erueti oversees more than 40 staff as well as the concessionaires in the valley.

She says: "The timing (for her move) has been just right, with the rebranding just completed and some very significant developments still to come at Te Puia.

"This is an operation that is going to push Maori tourism to another level and it is really cool that I will be a part of that."

WALID Bayouk and **Jaime Neal** have been appointed by The Carlton Hotel, Auckland, as business development managers for the corporate market.

Kylie Sutherland has been appointed business development executive for conferences and incentives.

Mr Neal previously worked as an AirNZ flight attendant and Mr Bayouk was previously business development manager for banquet sales. Ms Sutherland was previously conference manager at Hotel du Vin.

GRAND Pacific Tours have decided to restructure their operations management within New Zealand to cope with the growing passenger numbers and increased supplier base.

The one person management position has now been split into two seasonal North and South Island contract roles. In the North Island is **John Crummey** who arrived in New Zealand in 1966 from Dublin and in 1983 joined Johnston's Coachlines working as a courier/driver. He has also been coach captain for Grand Pacific Tours.

In the South Island is **Wayne Bowman** who took early retirement from Singapore Airlines.

He had been with the carrier 27 years and was manager South Island. They start on September 1.

Current fulltime manager Tim Briscoe finished his contract with the company yesterday (Thursday).

SANDRA Rippey on Monday started with Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing as convention and incentive manager.

Following an 11-month stint in the Tourism Rotorua Travel Office as a consultant on her return from Australia last year, Ms Rippey joined the RTO in the newly-created role of convention and incentive co-ordinator in January.

Ms Rippey was in Australia for five years during which time she held roles in the Sheraton Hotel chain including sales manager and sales executive catering and conventions at the Sheraton Mirage Resort and Spa on the Gold Coast, business development executive (conference and catering) at the Sheraton Perth, business development executive (corporate) at the Four Points by Sheraton, Sydney, and sales and marketing co-ordinator at the Hotel Nikko Darling Harbour, Sydney.

She says it's ironic she is back working for the Rotorua District Council as it was one of their scholarships that helped to obtain her degree.

"It's great that they, as employers, are now reaping the rewards of their investment in me."

Culture will become increasingly important, Luhrs tells media

CULTURAL tourism is becoming increasingly important to us, believes TIANZ CEO **Fiona Luhrs**. “It is one of the ways we can differentiate ourselves as a destination.”

She told a TRENZ media workshop: “One of the fascinating things is that, as people move away from traditional destinations into the regions, a whole bunch of towns have suddenly come alive and reinvented themselves. They have gone through thought processes in what is very special about them and what differentiates them as a town or area. They have suddenly decided there are some historical and heritage things and aspects of their culture that could be restored, renovated, written up about as stories - and told. Some exciting products are being developed as a result.”

People

Cultural tourism is about people, Maori Tourism Council CEO **Johnny Edmonds** told the journalists. “It is about September 11, the future, it has higher goals than commerce. It is about mutual respect and understanding...”

TNZ regional manager Australia **Gregg Anderson** said that when people return from New Zealand holidays they talk about the people more than the landscape. “They don’t say ‘wow that was a big mountain’ they go ‘wow the people - the people excited me, the people welcomed me, the people let me into their lives’ - and that’s very much what the essence of cultural tourism is about.

“It’s making sure that you engage with the society, the country, when you visit, because it’s meeting the people, learning their history, their belief structures, their legends, that really adds the sizzle to any holiday experience.”

Interaction

Kirk Demeter, president of US-based Down Under Answers, said people want to take more from a holiday than sights and scenery. “That interaction with people, culture and history adds so much to the visit.” He said that when the film *Whalerider* was released his company received many questions on Maori culture. His company’s brochure now contains four times as much cultural tourism product as in the past. Tourism has always been about culture, pointed out Rotorua museum director **Greg McManus**. “The origins of organised tourism, the Pink and White Terraces, where Europeans spend six months on a boat travelling 12,000 miles to see the terraces...They thought they were coming to see a landscape but they couldn’t get there without interacting with local people. They had to pay Maori guides to be taken by boat, to pay for food and lodging and at night they were entertained by kapahaka. This was 180 years ago. That

tradition has always been with us. These people might not have known they were immersed in cultural tourism but they certainly were.”

Mr McManus said museums have a huge responsibility. They are in every country and are some of the few institutions that have a value in every society. “International visitors understand what they are going to do at museum - that if they go they will learn more about the area they are in. For me that’s one responsibility we take seriously.”

Check

To a question that anyone could set themselves up as being “cultural” Mr Demeter said his company always checks out new product.

Mr Edmonds said that from a Maori viewpoint authenticity is about people sharing their own stories. “That’s the absolute base of authenticity. That is far removed from the time when it was common for people to be telling other people’s stories. Whilst that might once have been common practice...now the whole international community is moving away from that.”

Educated

Visitors know the difference between genuine New Zealand greenstone and Russian jade carved in China, pointed out Mr McManus. They are much more educated today.

“I have a problem putting a box around what is authentic Maori culture, as there is a real danger of creating stereotypes trapped in time, whereas Maori culture didn’t stop evolving after European settlement.” “It’s important to remember that what happened before Cook was fine for them but authenticity changes as we move on.”

When two German backpackers visited his museum they asked to be pointed towards an authentic Maori experience. “I said ‘go to my local pub’. I live at Ngongotaha, which is predominantly Maori. They came back next day and said they had the best night of their trip in New Zealand.”

Mr Anderson agreed that what is unique about New Zealand is the people. “You can go elsewhere and see different landscapes but this is the only place you will see people from New Zealand.”

Tension

There is tension between remaining true to your culture and making it available to others, added Mr Edmonds. “The tension is there, no question. The tension arises because we want to make things available. “Unfortunately if it is not carefully managed it has the capacity to impinge on the unique situations.” There can also be problems when something that is unique is commercialised.

An Australian journalist thought the focus seemed to be on Maori at present “when there is so much more...” Mr Edmonds said many people compartmentalise Maori tourism. “Maori culture is a complete culture and Maori

TRENZ report...TRENZ report...TRENZ report...

come in many shapes and forms. So, encountering Maori cultural experiences is not necessarily about being involved in any historical context.

“We are as contemporary as any other culture in the world and we captain rugby teams, own hotels and staff them and...Kiwi culture...Maori culture is an integral part of that.”

New product

Workshop chairman **Martin Rodgers** said new products encompass the best of both worlds.

He mentioned Abel Tasman Waka Tours and Tamaki Hikoi, Auckland. “They are building on the landscape and providing information on the myths, and history of that landscape plus spending time with real New Zealanders. So some product is coming through that is leveraging off our strong profile as a place with a fantastic landscape but infused with indigenous culture...”

Asked where the future lay for cultural tourism Mr Demeter said the interaction goes beyond Maori. There are many destinations with beautiful scenery, often closer to home, so we have to capitalise on our total Kiwi culture.

“That’s why we continue to see growth in tourism to New Zealand. My company has experienced this and we are not seeing it slowing down.”

Learn

Mr Anderson said we have to learn from each other and making sure all product is the best available, whether Maori or not. He commented on the warmth of our people and that some of our cultural product excels already.

Mr McManus: “There are some fantastic stories here and some great storytellers, and people love to be told stories. That’s what we do and should keep doing.”

Mr Rodgers said Maori culture continues to be infused throughout New Zealand.

He expects bilingual place names. It is appropriate that we focus on Maori when marketing New Zealand. UNESCO, Mr Edmonds added, has identified cultural tourism as a key to global development and peace.

“That’s the future we are talking about, specially in New Zealand where we have the capacity to pick it up and run with it.”

1M extra visitors, but we can still sustain environment - DoC

CAN our natural environment and assets that DoC looks after be sustainable when another million overseas visitors start arriving every year?

“With care it can,” replied the department’s concessions and tourism manager **Andy Thompson** when asked by media.

“Well managed, it can. Well monitored it can and, with the expertise we have, I believe it’s possible...but it needs care.”

Mr Thompson said visitor satisfaction monitoring includes crowding, conflict, potential damage to tracks and campsites, cave systems, rock climbing and quality interpretation.

Asked if the tax paid by tourists shouldn’t be reinvested in the industry and fund DoC, Mr Thompson said government has already given an extra \$349 million over 10 years to maintain visitor assets “so there is that recognition.”

TIANZ CEO **Fiona Luhrs** said the association intends to be more vocal on such issues.

“There is a lot of GST going into government’s coffers, as well as the tax that tourism businesses pay.

“So with \$500 million coming in every year from GST we would certainly be supporting DoC in any funding requests they make that will benefit the visitor experience on conservation land.”

Plans

Asked if there are plans to increase the percentage of total land administered by DoC from 33 percent, Mr Thompson said there were.

“We don’t have a full, proper, representative of New Zealand biota in that protected area system and we will be seeking to get that full representative value in there. “There is some resistance sometimes.

“But you do tend to find that when DoC is fighting those fights, doing those battles, that we get a lot of support from the public, from NGOs like Forest and Bird and Federated Mountain Clubs...they initiate a lot...one area where we are a bit short is the marine area. We are looking to be a lot better there and it’s something we are working very hard on.”

Hotspots

There are a number of “hotspots” where DoC is trying to plan for existing and future use including Abel Tasman National Park and Tongariro.

“We use a range of tools and are working with operators and the industry on how we can plan and manage those areas. Some hotspots can be easily managed through good proactive management.”

Domestic

Could domestic tourists be priced out of some areas?

“We keep a wary eye on that...but at the end of the day the mandate is to ensure that conservation values are protected and if we have to move to a quota system they will not always have to be based on price.”

He added that DoC feels more comfortable with the tourism strategy advocating a push for yield and not volume.

“That’s the key for us and that makes DoC feel more comfortable about tourism.”

Growth is not coming from the actual number of concessions, which increase only slightly each year, but it comes from within the concessions as small companies become medium-sized ones.

Nelson reflects show's success

FROM one booth to 12. That's how Nelson's presence at TRENZ has grown over the years. Latitude Nelson CEO Paul Davis says the first time the region attended there was only himself and Darryl Wilson of Abel Tasman Wilson's Experiences. This year there were eight operators in the Nelson section and four in other areas of the show.

"At first we had to spend all our time explaining where Nelson was. They all know the region now and what the products and services are all about. It's just a matter of updating and reacquainting each other," says Mr Davis. Among those new to TRENZ 2005 was Abel Tasman Sailing Adventures, run by former national sailing champion Jason Brownlie.

The company says it offers the only scheduled day sailing tours in the South Island.

Options range from half day to multi day tours as well as private charters.

Mr Brownlie, whose family have lived in the area for three generations, says it's New Zealand's best sailing location. Mr Davis says the company offers a soft adventure alternative for baby boomers who may want to see the park, but not from a kayak. Details: 021-527837 or www.sailingadventures.co.nz.

Burns chuffed with PM's visit

TIANZ chairman Geoff Burns says it was encouraging to see PM Helen Clark fly to Christchurch from Wellington just to see TRENZ.

"It's worth recognising the PM's efforts to make a personal visit during the lead into election time to address VIPs and walk around speaking to buyers and sellers. It is a strong endorsement of the industry."

West Coast RTO faces cuts

BEHIND the sleek corporate look of the West Coast presence at TRENZ lay unease that Buller District Council has cut funding to Tourism West Coast by five percent.

CEO Greg Howe says all three West Coast councils have in the past evenly shared the \$240,000 RTO's budget. There's a state of unease as the budget is reduced to \$216,500 - and no commitment beyond 2006.

Media reports claim the councils expect the West Coast Development Trust to front up with the difference.

Mr Howe tells IT Westland District Council previously said it would not fund tourism promotion. But after intensive lobbying it came around - only for Buller to do the same thing.

About 28 percent of the region's workforce is in tourism, an industry worth \$321 million to the local economy.

Most new product outside the Bay

THERE'S a lot of new product in Northland, points out Destination Northland manager Robyn Bolton. Most of it is outside the Bay of Islands.

"We are not trying to replace the Bay, which is iconic. But there are many other places in Northland well worth visiting." These include the Hokianga Harbour, which now boasts a Copthorne Hotel and Resort. This is the base for Footprints Waipoua which offers guided cultural tours into the local kauri forest - by day or night.

Tutukaka has the Oceans Hotel. Tutukaka Wild Adventure offers 55 hectares of fun including two one kilometre luge tracks, a petting zoo, climbing wall, shooting gallery, mini golf and bush walks. And Dive Tutukaka runs the Cave Rider to the Poor Knights Islands and the world's largest surveyed sea cave.

Also new is Lodge Bordeaux, a 15-unit motel in Whangarei boasting five stars, as does Waipoua Lodge, a four-room property made from a single tree.

Karikari Estate, Northland's largest winery, has opened, as has Gumdiggers' Park, which shares the story of early migrants.

Cape Brett Walkways has added a new boat and product. The boat is *Matariki*, which can carry 15 passengers on a Hole Cape Experiencz, while the new option is a full day land and sea tour.

Also new: Darryl's Dinner Cruises: the Northern Steam Boat Co heritage cruise from the Kerikeri Stone Store; Taiamai Tours, which includes a waka experience from the foreshore of Paihia; Fernz Eco Tours of Russell, where local identity Fern Jobitt shares the region where she grew up; Peter and Glennis Meier's Cliffedge - Treetops, which boasts four suites; a 10 day golfing tour of the North Island by Northland Tours; Heron Hill lodge in Kerikeri; Glowworms and Culture Tour from Paihia; a full day in the kauri forest with Unique Kauri Experience; Flagstaff Lodge, Russell. Details: 09-4027683 or www.northlandnz.com.

Coromandel exhibits top golf course

COROMANDEL has much new product including the Lakes Resort Golf and Country Club, six kilometres from Pauanui. There are two and three bedroom villas, a 300 m golf driving range, bar and café.

Ocean Wave Tours Mercury Bay offers "an up close and explorative journey of discovery" while Dive HQ Whitianga offers overnight dive trips with sleeping on an eight berth launch. Also at Whitianga is Mercury Bay Seafaris' glass bottom boat, which offers snorkelling trips, visits to dolphins or penguins.

Colleith Lodge at Tairua is described as a role model for other b and b properties. It has three guest rooms, swimming and spa pools. Other new properties include: the Mussell Bed b and b, Cook's Beach; Ohukua Farm

Lodge and Driftwood Lodge, Whitianga; 33 Patui, Thames. Rapaura, 30 minutes north of Thames, is known for its 26ha gardens - and its new café.

Hobbiton Shire's Rest launched

THE Shire's Rest, Hobbiton, was officially launched onto the group tour market at TRENZ by Rings Scenic Tours of Matamata. Marketing manager Henry Horne says an old woolshed - on the farm used as a location for the *Lord Of The Rings* - has been turned into a modern restaurant, conference and function centre. Demand for food and drink has increased from 50 a day to 200 at a time and the new facility was opened by PM Helen Clark in December. After the company successfully hosted 560 of the world's wealthiest people from the luxury liner *Crystal Serenity* in February (IT533) the site has now become available to the group market.

Mr Horne says many of those who visit Hobbiton have never seen Peter Jackson's trilogy. But they have read the book, which has been a best seller for 60 years. "It has a following well beyond the movie. People come and relive what has been just a fantasy for them for so long. People just flock to the events that have occurred. Now we have advanced into the incentive market and put on themed events. Many doors are opening. It's an endless oyster with huge potential..."

Mr Horne adds: "The set itself has a longevity far beyond what people give it credit for because of the history of the book and the movie, which has had a huge impact. We have bookings to 2008. So we know there's a forecast for us to continue and to push on with the product. It's about how we manage it and make sure we keep our feet on the ground and provide a high class service to our clients."

HCI has new brochure and website

HERITAGE and Character Inns now has 93 members, says chairman Gary Tate. The group was launched in 1994 and now has a glossy directory and central reservations system for wholesalers. Properties must be New Zealand owned and operated and at least four star Qualmark graded. Details: 025-370622 or www.heritageinns.co.nz.

Definitely different...

LOG cabins in treetops. Definitely different. Rainforest Retreat, Franz Josef, has six of them. They are either at canopy height - or on the forest floor, says GM Mike Warren. The units have room service, air conditioning, seven channels of Sky TV, kitchen facilities and ensuites. The business also boasts a backpackers' lodge 57 campervan sites, two spas and a sauna. Contact: 021-954665, 0800-873346 or www.rainforestretreat.co.nz.

Interislander keeps up with changing booking patterns

THE way people book holidays and travel has changed dramatically in the last two years, reckons Interislander GM passenger services and hospitality Martin Weekes. He says passengers now book in different ways. It started globally when the airlines began encouraging people to book online. Visitors have also become more computer savvy. Many want to book only when they get here.

"All this means is that our retail partners in New Zealand are particularly important to us because you never really know where the customer chooses to book - and it's really the consumer who chooses."

Mr Weekes is responsible for marketing, sales and onboard services, so the Interislander is able to deliver an "end to end experience across the whole brand." Sales are split into channels with one person looking after the online service and terminals, while a second looks after retail and wholesale, and a third key accounts such as campervans and car hire firms. "The system is based around the way people book." His target is to increase by eight percent each year the number of passengers who use interisland ferries, from the present figure of about a million.

Capacity up

A media conference at TRENZ heard that the new ferry *Kaitaki* will increase passenger capacity on the strait by 26 percent.

Toll Shipping GM Paul Garaty said the company is ensuring it has the capacity to grow. "This is the first stage of the development of our business which includes working on our terminals to ensure they are brought up to a standard which is world class."

The Dutch-built *Kaitaki* will replace *The Lynx* and the freight ship *Purbeck*. She was built in 1995 for Irish Ferries as the *Isle of Innisfree*. In 2002 she was chartered to P&O ferries as the *Pride of Cherbourg*. More recently she has been chartered as the *Stena Challenger* as part of the Scandinavian Stena Line, for its Baltic service.

The 22,000 tonne 180-metre *Kaitaki* can carry up to 600 cars and 1,600 passengers and will be the company's flagship.

"This is just the start for us," added Mr Garaty. "We are also looking at rail ferries and their configuration and hope to have announcements of other changes hope as we want to provide service levels and standards fitting the trade we are in."

Asked if the company is considering using the *Kaikati* on other than the Wellington-Picton run, Mr Garaty replied: "We are always looking for other opportunities in terms of what the market wants. We are looking around the New Zealand coast as to what we can actually do...the market, at this stage, is for Wellington-Picton. But if it changes we will look at it."

NZ - popular with hotel investors?

NEW Zealand is for the second year in a row the most preferred country in which to invest in hotels, after Australia, according to the latest Sonnenblick-Goldman's survey on investors.

Results show that 92 percent of investors consider the hotel investment outlook to be positive, compared with 95 percent last year and only 34 percent in 2003. Some 62 percent consider hotels to be more attractive than other real estate. Last year it was 48 percent and in 2003 just seven percent.

They also consider there's a better equity outlook for existing hotels, and a better outlook for debt in new and existing hotels.

The weight of investment capital looking for opportunities and a recent softening in investor support for some alternative property classes are helping the relative standing of hotels.

The report adds: "Recent growth in revenues will need to be matched by improving profits and investment returns if current investor sentiment is to be sustained. "A limitation on the amount of finance for new build will also remain critical to a market that is betting against the risk of a repeat of the 1990s style boom/bust scenario for this industry."

The company shows that when it comes to new build, investors prefer Brisbane, followed by Sydney and Wellington.

When it comes to the capitalisation rate of 18 hotel markets, Wellington is fourth with Auckland seventh, Christchurch ninth and Queenstown 14th.

"For the third year in a row most markets reflect firmer cap rates. Wellington, Brisbane and Canberra achieved stand out improvements. Adelaide and Christchurch also evidenced limited, but continuing improvements in relative standings."

Quality conservation saves money

AN agreement between the industry and DoC is to save operators hundreds of dollars.

From yesterday (Thursday) the safety requirements to gain a DoC concession can be met by gaining a Qualmark accreditation.

The initiative between DoC and Qualmark standardises the requirements for independently audited safety plans. Now, any tourism company that has gained the Qualmark will simultaneously meet the health and safety audit requirements for a DoC concession, instead of having to pay for two separate audits. This will save operators time and money.

TNZ CEO George Hickton says: "This is a really concrete benefit for the tourism industry. Tourism bodies have been working increasingly closely with DoC and other conservation bodies to ensure that we are working together for the same end goal."

The process adds value for operators and visitors alike says Qualmark CEO Geoff Penrose.

"In this case, less IS more! By becoming Qualmark-accredited, tourism operators will gain all sorts of useful business knowledge, while customers will now be able to choose concession holders knowing that not only are their environmental practices sound, but that the whole operation of their business is of absolute top quality."

Lions' roar leaves \$1.7M for Southland
LIONS fans probably left \$1.7 million in Southland after their whirlwind visit, reckons Venture Southland strategic marketing manager John Grant. This is based on 7,100 Lions fans staying 1.9 nights with an average expenditure of \$115 a day.

"That would make it in the top three events for the year along with the Bluff Seafood Festival and, interestingly enough, the Royal A and P Show."



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