

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

It is hard to believe that another year is almost over. We would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a fabulous New Year and for those lucky enough to have holidays – enjoy. We look forward to catching up in 2006.

It has been a great year for ATTHEA with the launch of our new website and the development of the newsletter. A big highlight for the year of course was the conference in Hobart. .

The ATTHEA Executive

Diary Events

Date	Event
March	Newsletter – Get your stories in by 15 Feb
20/21 April	TTA Trainers Conference Sydney
SEPT 06	ATTHEA Conference - Queensland date to be advised

NOTE Change of date for the next ATTHEA Conference

Call for News Items

To ensure that your good news stories do not go unnoticed please forward to Reg Edwards via email to: reg.edwards@tafensw.edu.au

I will keep a bank of items so that we can ensure regular publication of the newsletter. Thanks to those who have already contributed.

Tourism and Hospitality Training Package Review

The initial recommendations from the Training Package Review are now available on the Service Industries Skills Council website: <http://www.serviceskills.com.au/>

Agent of the Future

The travel industry's students of today are our agents of tomorrow. For over 15 years, Galileo, in conjunction with the Mundus Institute of California, has provided Travel Training Institutions in Australia and New Zealand with software training programs to assist with the

training of the Galileo GDS. More recently we have provided industry recognised training and support to colleges training mid-back office accounting and client profile maintenance.

Galileo is committed to supporting the development of travel agents of distinction, and in conjunction with the travel industry's leading principals and training suppliers, continues to lead the way with the introduction (in 2001), of the **Galileo Agent of the Future program**.

The future of the industry depends on the continuing development of qualified, passionate and outstanding students, who rely on interesting and professional training and industry support at every level. The Galileo Agent of the Future program has been designed to publicly acknowledge and provide incentive to travel students to reach greater standards of excellence, thus helping to create and foster professional learning environments for the agents of the future. The Galileo Agent of the Future will honour those students who have demonstrated the qualities that set them apart from their peers.

Teachers at participating colleges may, subject to the rules, nominate a student for an award by completing and submitting an application electronically. Nominating teachers and the colleges at which they work are also eligible to win an annual prize.

Nominated students complete an online nomination form. To complete this successfully they are required to research the sponsor's web sites. The preliminary winners are rewarded with training programs, site visits, and tours and resume preparation, supplied by the sponsors.

The three preliminary winners then go through a rigorous interview process, and are required to submit their resume to the HR departments of three of the sponsors. The overall winner is rewarded with a trip to Singapore and London, with training, site visits and tours included. The sponsors – Travel People, Mike Henry Travel Insurance Specialists (NZ), Trafalgar Tours, Travel Week, Marriott, British Airways,

Business Travel International, Travel Personnel (NZ), Aussietravelcover, See Sydney and Beyond Smartvisit card HP, Mundus and Avis also participate in the annual Travel Training Symposium. Presentations at the Symposiums are then made available for use in the various training institutions.

For more information on Galileo's Agent of the Future program please visit:

www.agentofthefuture.com

The Agent of the Future for 2005 is **Georgia Mackey from Drysdale Institute in Hobart**. Congratulations to both Georgia and the Drysdale Institute.



Georgia (centre) with Janet Bidgood, Program Co-ordinator Drysdale Institute (left) and Claire Hatton, Director of Marketing, Pacific, Cendant (right) receiving her award.



Tackling the Industry's Skill Shortage

The Travel Industry, like many other industries, is currently experiencing a skills shortage. However a variety of unique challenges, such as the vulnerability to world events, worsen this problem for the Travel Industry. Unless the industry can work together to tackle these issues it will face a severe skills shortage in the future.

Companies are finding it increasingly difficult to find experienced and qualified staff. A number of factors contribute to the shrinking workforce.

These include:

- ✚ low unemployment levels
- ✚ an ageing population
- ✚ a decline in population growth

Economists predict that these factors are set to continue for the foreseeable future, thus worsening the situation.

To tackle these issues, other industries are focussing on training programs to ensure a continued flow of staff in the future. Incentives are also being put in place for retaining older workers.

The Travel Industry however, has a reluctance to take on and train up junior staff. Recruitment specialists, Travel People, find that approximately fifty percent of resumes that pass through are from candidates who have done a relevant travel course, but don't have any working experience in the Travel Industry.

“Unless the industry can become more willing to take on these people, we will worsen the situation by losing them to other industries and discourage new people to consider travel as a career path,” says Sandra Chiles, Managing Director of Travel People.

Other issues include a reluctance to take on older workers, a reluctance to take on staff from other industries and a reluctance to take on staff that are returning to the industry - even though these people are often highly skilled and can offer a wealth of broader experience.

Industry leaders were brought together over two days by Travel People as a first step towards tackling these issues. The discussion was mediated by an independent party, R3 Consulting, with Mike Hatton of AFTA and Peter Baily of CATO also attending. The discussion focussed on the key reasons why the industry faces a skills shortage and what could be done to overcome them.

Attendees agreed that the current staffing shortage was the most serious issue the Travel Industry currently faces. It was undisputed that the issue could only be addressed as an industry as a whole and that companies needed to work together to solve the problems identified. They called for recognition at a government level, with the industry collectively supporting AFTA.

Sandra Chiles stated that “whilst funding is one of the issues, what's really needed is for industry leaders to come together and commit their time to tackling the issues. It's our industry, our problem and only we can solve it. If we don't put in the time, who will? We're taking our own steps to tackle some of the

problems such as attending school expos to promote the benefits of joining the travel industry.”

The next stage is a call to action for industry leaders to come together to resolve this issue. Travel People **Media release July 05**

Skills shortage: Industry Forum identifies the issues and plans action

A travel industry forum initiated by prominent industry identity Sandra Chiles of Travel People has nominated four key strategies central to addressing the skills and staff shortage in the travel industry.

Chiles who established Travel People 25 years ago as Australia's first specialist travel recruitment firm said changing perceptions of the industry, embracing on-the-job training, better aligning education with industry needs and a cohesive and united approach to the skills shortage issue by the industry are the four potential drivers identified by forum participants as the way forward.

“This issues list is a result of several rounds of meetings and workshops attended by a range of senior industry members.

“It is pleasing that there is broad agreement by participants in relation to what the problems are and the direction we need to go in order to fix them.

“Changes in technology, economics including fuel prices and world events have tended to get on top of us in recent years at the same time as the employment situation in this country has tightened dramatically. I am pleased to say that there is a widespread realisation that we need to sell the industry to itself, and outsiders looking in. We need to promote the fact that this is an exciting industry in which to work with great diversity, opportunity and fulfilment. We need to attract people from other industries and of all age groups as well entry-level candidates.

“The Australian labour market is continually changing. The proportion of the population in work is decreasing and the average age of work force participants has been going up.

“There is increasing recognition that we can't simply expect to get 'perfect people' with the exact skills we want straight off-the-shelf or out

of an educational institution. There is growing agreement that economic pressure and squeeze on margins notwithstanding, on-the-job training and career development are key issues that need attention.

“The issue of educational alignment with the industry is not a new one but it is one that has been identified as needing more attention. Closer relationships, better understanding and better communication are some of the things on the agenda here.

“Finally everyone involved in the forum meetings recognises that the only people who can solve this problem are ourselves. Further, it's recognised that the greatest chance of success is if the problem is tackled head on by the industry acting as one. We have made the results of our deliberations known to the major industry bodies and we are hopeful and confident that the energy and concern that has already been tapped will be replicated by our industry leaders and that these issues and others will be embraced with as many resources as the industry can muster.

‘An unstated or hidden theme common throughout is that everyone in the industry has to recognise that the competition for people that we must focus upon is not between travel companies but between our industry and other industries. The quicker we act together the sooner we are likely to make substantial progress in addressing an issue that affects us all. We can't do anything about fuel prices or terrorism but we can do something about attracting and equipping people to work with us!

Travel People Media release 19 October 2005

Many thanks to Travel People for allowing publication in Around and About.