



Vanuatu

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Welcome to our sixth issue of T & H E-Info Newsletter.

We hope that you find in this issue valuable and insightful information for you and your business. We do invite your ideas, concerns and systems of best practices that you consider important.

By sharing what we know, we are value adding to the Vanuatu pool of knowledge. By doing this, we have more information to inform our decisions, on which, we direct the future of this developing industry.

More informed decisions mean better and more sustainable development – an outcome in which not just those within the tourism, but every single resident in the country will benefit from.

Images in this issue are of a little frequented but wonderful island of Gaua with its spectacular treks in pre-historic forests, a crater lake, volcano and awesome waterfalls. The island is making a reputation from its unique water music performed by the women by clapping in and under water.

Big fela tank yu tumas to George, owner operator of **Wongrass Bungalows**, Gaua and his professional tour guide John who could not do enough to ensure I experienced their island.

John Nicholls



We are excited to introduce a new part to our newsletter – **'The Vanuatu Achievers'**.

Humans are social animals. We hang out together, more often than not. We like to do what the rest of us seem to be doing. The herd instinct. Now and then though, a few black sheep come along and do something different. This scares the flock. However, a few brave sheep will slowly try the new way, if simply out of curiosity. If it works for them, more will find the courage to join the breakaway guys. And so, the numbers grow until eventually those that have not followed the new way are seen as the outcasts.

Without those first daring black sheep, human society would be doomed to stagnate. Fresh approaches would never occur and human existence would atrophy, from lack of movement.

These black sheep are bucking the trends. They are searching for the means to make the country a better place to live, work and enjoy.

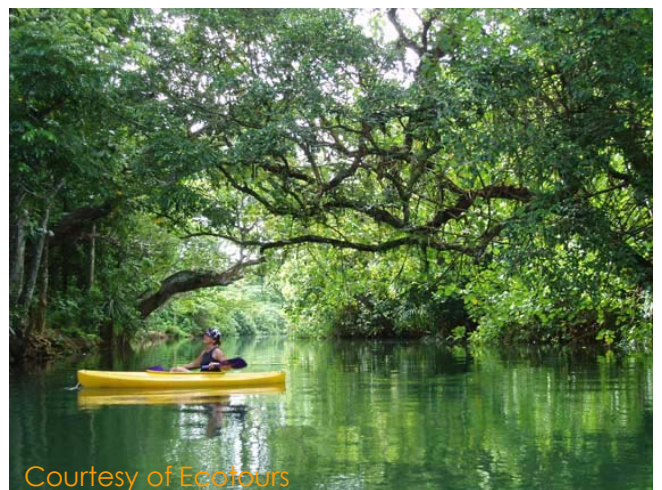
They will be seen stumbling and falling as they find their feet. They will get lost and arrive at dead ends. But so have all pathfinders who have tried to discover a new way forward. The going is often tough, especially when one looks behind and sees that not many are following; they will though, as the path becomes a little clearer. Besides, isn't the view more exciting up front, than it is stuck back with the crowd? Tourism & Hospitality E-Info will profile these committed pioneers that follow their dream with passion. We are happy to help their exhilaration of trail breaking and more than happy to hand them a bush knife (figuratively of course) to cut through the forest of mediocrity.

This month's Vanuatu Achiever is Pascal Guillet. T & H E-Info caught up with this inexhaustible man, owner/operator of Vanuatu Ecotours to find out what drives him.....



Pascal, why Ecotours? *"I wanted to share this unique beautiful country with everyone from all walks of life. To provide a life changing experience by taking people out of their safety zone, to awaken the human spirit, the human attachment and need to connect with something real, nature.*

People exist in such sanitized comfort. The urban lifestyle found in modern society has over hundreds of years desensitized the natural consciousness. I like to provide the opportunity to make them touch their inner self by providing breathtaking locations and experiences which are not on the brochures. I like to see people do things they never thought capable of doing." (Don't be surprised if Pascal takes you to a secret cave where the only access is through a waterfall deep in the jungle which is in turn only accessible by kayak!).



Courtesy of Ecotours



..... Vanuatu Achievers

After probing this passionate man, you find that he is the Vanuatu representative for RAM (Rotary Anti Malaria Project) which in conjunction with the Bill Gates Foundation, teaches village communities malaria prevention practices in addition donates mosquito nets to needy people throughout the islands (1,200 nets to date). Pascal's other project is buying and re-selling indigenous carvings for parents to pay their children's school fees (Pascal provides this service for free).

Another part of this project is to encourage visiting travellers to sponsor a local child's education. He has two Australian families presently doing so.

As a diversion from all his activities, Pascal returns to his love of sports, playing and coaching villager's soccer and volleyball. You guessed it; he also supplies the equipment for free for them to keep.

Pascal Guillet Profile

Born and educated in France, Pascal has lived in Vanuatu for 14 years. A keen walker, mountain biker, tennis player, and horse rider. Pascal has travelled extensively throughout Vanuatu acquiring a vast knowledge of the islands and maintained a unique, indigenous network. Owner of the highly successful Vanuatu Ecotours, Pascal is continually searching and training NiVanuatu in tour management furthering the understanding and practice of ecotourism throughout the islands. Fluent in French, English, and Bislama, Pascal holds degrees in Sports Education.

For further information: Vanuatu Ecotours,
E: ecotour@vanuatu.com.vu; ph: (678) 25299
W: www.vanuatu-ecotour.com.vu



The Plight of the NiVanuatu Bungalow

As I travel through the Vanuatu Islands, and stay in numerous locally owned and operated accommodation (Bungalows), I am in awe of the resourcefulness of these operators who have so little base to work from, yet manage to construct and operate accommodation for travellers. The meager financial return generated is primarily used for their children's education.

Their courage and determination is inspiring. Travellers experiencing an outer island Bungalow, depart with a longing to help.

The question is how?

Well, one drawback for Bungalows is a next to nil capital base from which to purchase essential equipment to operate their humble lodgings. One of the most needed (amongst a long list), are mattresses. Yes, basic foam mattresses.

T & H E-Info and Go Vanuatu (importers) have secured foam mattresses at landed cost price for the Bungalows. We are presently asking for any business interested to sponsor a mattress (or two...) to a needy NiVanuatu Bungalow.

The mattresses landed cost are:

Double 100mm – 11,000vt
Double 150mm – 16,000vt
Single 100mm – 9,800vt
Single 150mm – 11,500vt

Vanuatu Hotels will pay for the transport of the mattresses to the island Bungalow.

Another Way to Help:

If you own or operate a hotel/resort and are refurbishing, please remember that furniture, linen, mattresses, pillows, curtains, towels, pots and pans etc., you consider too old, would be very welcomed by an outer island Bungalow.

If you wish to sponsor a mattress, or have other equipment which you want to donate, please contact Silvana on 24444 or Email: johnsilv@vanuatu.com.vu and we will ensure it goes to a needy Bungalow.

Tank Yu Tumas

Beware of some so-called Internet Accommodation Booking Services



We are receiving requests for assistance from travellers who have unsuccessfully tried to book hotels in Vanuatu via certain "on-line booking" websites. The resort or hotel they have tried to book is advertised on the site, but always full, actually a number of the hotels on the same site are full when in actual fact, the same hotels are half empty. What is happening? Why are these sites doing this? One of the reasons is that the operators of these 'on-line booking sites' seem to be more

concerned about the advertising space revenue from the website than actually operating a professional, and genuine on-line booking service. The greater the hotel inventory and rooms on their books, the greater the perception that they are a major player, justifying their advertising rates.

Apart from unethical business practices by the website operator, the hotel is intentionally being robbed of sales. We suggest that if you own or operate a hotel, resort or guesthouse you do a Google search under "Accommodation Vanuatu" or similar, then check out the websites ranked on the first 3 pages of your find. Even if you have never heard of the site, look into it. You may be surprised to find your property advertised as one of their chosen properties in Vanuatu! And you may find the information on your property incorrect.

Some website operators will list as many countries as possible, find the NTO site to locate and download your website content, images and build their so called Vanuatu inventory. When it all goes wrong, the results are quite humorous: One site has Epi Island Guesthouse as "*the nearest property to the international airport*" (for those who are not familiar with Epi Guesthouse, it is on Epi Island, 25 minute flight from the international Airport in Port Vila.)

Another reason for this fraudulent internet behaviour is the hope that some unsuspecting traveller will find this hotel entry and want to book it. The website operator will contact the hotel via email and ask the hotel to register with them urgently otherwise they will lose the booking.

In order to test the authenticity of some of these sites, we have tried to make a booking into hotels we know have vacancies. On many occasions, the same hotel is fully booked. This is a way of guaranteeing to the contracted hotels that they have bookings. For example, by placing let's say, the three hotels they wish to sell, they will also place the nearest competing properties to these contracted hotels on the site – have a 'resort full' generated answer, redirecting all sales to the properties they have contacted.

The contracted hotel is unknowingly an accomplice to this scam, is naturally happy with the site for such good booking response. The website operator's job is highly simplified with nominal hotels to deal with (usually contracted hotels are only the top end properties providing the highest commission).

"I will always promote the management of the product before the product." ...Major Australian Travel Wholesaler

Beware of some so-called Internet Accommodation Booking Services (cont'd)

Another fraudulent practice is for some "book on line" sites to quote extraordinary cheap rates in order to hook the traveller in. Once the traveller is in dialogue with the website operator they are led down a well rehearsed path only to find out that in the end, the room that was advertised is no longer available (it never existed) but "the next room is available"...you guessed it; it's more expensive! Actually, dearer than anywhere else on the net. This is a technique practiced by a well-known player on the net.

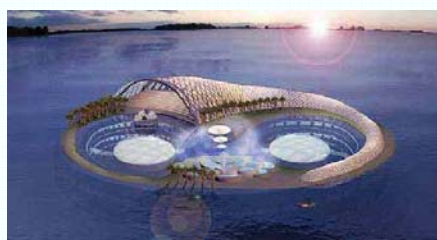
This particular 'on-line' operator sold a room (accepted booking deposit) to a traveller at a vastly cheaper price than Vanuatu Hotels (actually 18% less than net wholesale). However, this website operator did not know we had booked the very last room. The farce unfolded over the following days as the traveller jumped ship from VHL to our competitor due to the extraordinary rate offered by them and came back just as swiftly as he discovered that our competitor had no room to sell at the advertised super cheap rate (yet confirmed the booking). The alternative room rate suggested to the client was 12% above VHL rate. The customer contacted and rebooked with VHL. The traveller turned out to be a senior executive of an international airline company!

Cyberspace competition is growing at a rapid rate; there are no enforceable rules, only self-regulated ethics.

In addition to the internet medium being still in its relative infancy, it is a different marketplace in which to operate; one that many accommodation providers do not understand fully, therefore tread lightly.

Who can you trust? Who will do your business justice; represent it with dignity and integrity? Well, that's up to you to be vigilant. Time should be put aside by you or a competent person to scour the net, looking not only for the frauds doing your business (and the destination) harm, but the opportunities for you to be on the good sites. Good sites have a mission, an ideological core; you can see the genuine product. They usually don't have a plethora of junk adverts on their home page. They have a face, not bargain banners. Content is written with genuine respect to the intended reader, not insensible one liner dribble to incorporate all key search words for the sole purpose of maximizing their search engine rankings.

Extreme development.....



Left: Hydropolis, billed as 'the underwater ultra luxury resort hotel' is expected to be completed

by October 2006. It will be located on the Jumeirah coastline of Dubai, already home to the Burj al-Arab, the world's first seven star hotel. Hydropolis is structured in three elements: the land station, the connecting tunnel, and the submarine complex. The land station is the reception and welcome centre for the hotel's guests. The connecting tunnel is the lifeline of the complex and not only provides access for guests, but also enables provisioning of the hotel with all the necessary goods. And finally, the submarine complex is the hotel itself with its wide range of unique additional facilities.

Right: Nakheel has recently launched the Dubai Waterfront project, which aims to be the



largest of its kind in the world. The project, once complete, will transform 81 million sq. miles of beachfront into a mixed – use development that will encompass more than 250 best-of-the breed master planned communities and offerings. Dubai Waterfront is bigger than Manhattan and Beirut, and forms the first phase of a larger effort, the Arabian Canal. The harbour will house a series of zones with mixed use, commercial, residential, resort, and amenity areas.

Source: RMIT International University.



John Blacket – GM, Erakor Island Resort & Spa, Port Vila, Vanuatu (ex Regional Director Asia/Pacific Integrated Energy Services (IES))

With the world community focused on protecting the environment, ecotourism has become a growth industry and against a background of concern over energy security and climate change, the use of renewable energy practices and technologies has become a focus for ecotourism operators all over the world. Renewable energy has a key role to play not only in addressing emission targets nationally and globally, but also in accessing local energy sources which can help facilitate sustainable development and meet international targets. If the benefits it offers are to be maximized, renewable energy needs to be an integral part of strategies for sustainable development in all ecotourism facilities. Improving the operational efficiency of energy systems for ecotourism projects in the Asia/South Pacific region will be the key to the region's sustainable and economic future. High energy operating costs limits and constrains the potential for further tourism accommodation development. This paper describes a "Sustainable Energy Decision Model and Technologies" developed to evaluate energy supply and end-use options for ecotourism development and gives examples of its application in several case studies throughout the Australia and the Pacific Islands.

Sustainability – The Key Difference

It is generally accepted that ecological sustainability is one of the key differences between ecotourism and mainstream tourism. It therefore follows that ecotourism operators must be able to demonstrate their "environmental friendliness" in a variety of ways in order to distinguish their operation from conventional tourism. Failure to do this will most certainly limit the growth of the industry and will result in the public questioning the "genuineness" of ecotourism operations.

Ecotourism means Best Practice Environmental Management

Tourists, like most groups, are major consumers of energy and water. In conventional tourism, basic services such as energy and water (and waste) take a back seat to the core business of providing accommodation. Ecotourism on the other hand cannot afford to operate under this model. The future of the industry depends on its operators being able to demonstrate 'best practice' across the board – including the delivery of basic services. Any less and it is not ecotourism – its just plain tourism. One of the easiest ways to achieve sustainability is through energy efficiency.



Minimalist Approach

Most existing operators recognize the industries inherent reliance on the natural environment and make genuine efforts to reduce their energy (and water and waste). The usual response, however, is to restrict services. This is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, there is a perception that it costs more to be sustainable and that payback periods for efficient technologies are too long to recoup the high capital costs associated with the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Most believe that 'sustainability' will come from a lowering of capital costs specifically through improvements in solar panels and energy efficient appliances.

Lack of Experience in Whole System Design

Secondly, there is a lack of expertise in whole system design. Most designers are familiar with the problems associated with delivering energy services in remote areas. However, the typical design model is based on energy and water and waste services being supplied by the state. Naturally, this has led to a tendency to over design and a view that 'efficiency' is associated with supplying bigger and better service facilities.

Cost Penalties for Ecotourism Resorts

This is at odds with ecotourism resort developments, which are typically located in remote or environmentally sensitive areas without access to the electricity grid, town water and other vital services. The cost penalties for ecotourism resort developers therefore puts substantial financial burden in respect of operations compared to grid powered equivalents with energy costs some 3 to 5 times lower. They not only have additional costs incurred through having to supply their own services and meeting government regulations and other inhibiting factors associated with an environmentally sensitive or remote location but they have additional capital and operational costs imposed through over design service facilities.

This then is why the ecotourism industry is currently characterized by small operators who assume a minimalist approach to disruption and damage. There are very few big players in ecotourism.



Gaua Isld. Beach

The Value of Good Design

The reality is that substantial cost savings (and subsequently greenhouse gas reductions) can be achieved through the use of good design practice and ecotourism can be made available to more than just the elite few. Good design has always been a tangible business asset in any business – but for ecotourism, it is vital. It not only demonstrates the operator's commitment to sustainability but it can be the difference between profitability and eeking out a living.

Technologies and Energy

Ecotourism facilities that use best practice environmental technologies are assured of reducing environmental impacts while improving profitability. Minimising energy use is a key contributor to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, diesel fuel, LPG gas and water use. In areas of high environmental sensitivity, renewable and low impact technologies should be given priority where they can be proven to be cost effective. In a number of cases, grid connection is uneconomic when compared to self generation. Quantification of known impacts eg., greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel usage, noise pollution will assist in minimizing environmental impacts. Environmentally sound technologies are less polluting, use all resources in a more sustainable manner, recycle more of their waste and products, handle residual wastes in a more acceptable manner than the technologies for which they were substitutes, and are compatible with nationally determined economic, cultural and environmental policies. Renewable energy technologies fit these criteria as well.

Commercial available renewable energy and energy efficient technologies can be integrated and the secret is to select the combination of technologies and practices that best match the needs of the site and its users and is adapted to local environmental conditions. All energy saving technologies are readily available off the shelf and should have demonstrated their reliability in other projects. The use of proven technologies is essential (see www.vanuatu-hotels.vu – Epi Guesthouse (Budget), for mini hydro system. Editors note.



Courtesy of Ecotours

"I've learned that for a happy day, look for something bright and beautiful in nature. Listen for a beautiful sound, speak a kind word to some person, and do something nice for someone without their knowledge." ...Anon

Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

Performance based evaluation of energy sustainability will provide consumers with the assurance that ecotourism operators are based on sustainable energy management practices. The use of best practice environmental technologies will have a positive economic and financial benefit to the operator and there is no reason why sustainability and energy efficient facilities cannot go hand in hand. Best practice in energy service delivery, therefore should be based on a methodology that promotes ecological sustainability.

The quality of service, facilities and development need not be compromised in order to be energy efficient and rigorous economic analysis of energy services will improve energy efficiency and reduce long run operating costs. Substantial energy costs can be achieved through the use of good design practice and energy efficiency will save more money than it costs.



Gaua Isld. Treking

The Natural Greenhouse Effect

Human activity is affecting the planet's climate system and is one of today's most prominent and urgent issues. Available scientific evidence shows that the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere due to human activity is causing global warming. Climate change is likely to have severe and unpredictable consequences such as higher mean temperatures and radical changes in weather patterns and rainfall. Higher temperatures mean that drier regions become drier and wet regions wetter. Rapid temperature change may cause extreme weather events such as hurricanes, sea level rise and floods with severe implications for infrastructure, property, social systems and nature. There will be environmental impacts such as desertification, salinity and erosion. Changes in agriculture patterns, land use, water supplies and the migration of labour will have knock on effects on the economy and society. While some of these may be beneficial, major diseases such as malaria are likely to extend their reach as temperatures rise, with major implications for public health.

Innovative Sustainable Tourism Business – Case Studies

Turtle Island Resort Fiji

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has bestowed two prestigious "Grand Awards" on Turtle Island for its outstanding achievements in the areas of Environment and Culture. Turtle Island received a Gold and a Grand PATA Green Leaf Environment Award for its long term commitment to the natural environment including eco-friendly waste disposal processes and regularly scheduled environmental audits. Situated on Nanuya Levu a 210 hectare island with volcanic origin in the Yasawa Islands in north western Fiji, Turtle Island Resort accommodates 30 guests and staff accommodation of 200. The resort utilizes its own power generation equipment and full water services infrastructure and sewerage treatment plant. Richard Evanson, the owner of Turtle Island Resort commissioned IES to design and construct a wind power generation system to capture the local breezes and to install on the diesel generator a heat recovery system to supply all hot water for kitchen, laundry and bures. In addition standard resort equipment and lighting was replaced with super efficient alternatives. The outcomes included a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 145 tonnes, primary energy use down by 60%, diesel fuel reduced by 80,000 litres per annum and water demand reduced by 50%. An overall saving of \$82,000 per annum resulted in operating costs.

Sailfish on Fraser Island

Sailfish on Fraser Island, located off the east coast of southern Queensland is a \$3 million development and is situated on a 48 perch block in Happy Valley on the world's largest sand island and a World Heritage Area. The 10 two bedroom apartment resort is surrounded by freshwater lakes, mangrove swamps and tropical rainforest and opened in December 1999. The resort utilizes its own power generation equipment and full water services infrastructure and has its own water treatment plant, water pump station and sewerage treatment plant. Eco-efficient saving initiatives included intelligent load shedding, super energy efficient lights and lighting control systems, passive solar design throughout the resort, heat recovery from generators used for clothes drying and to heat the pool and hot water from gas boosted solar water heaters. Outcomes for Sailfish resulted in primary energy use down by 80%, greenhouse gas emissions down 85% on the original design and an \$80,000 saving in annual operating costs.

Binna Burra Mountain Lodge

Binna Burra Mountain Lodge is Australia's longest established nature-based tourism resort and is situated in World Heritage listed Lamington National Park in south eastern Queensland and accommodates 115 guests in 41 rustic style units built from local timber. The lodge has its own water treatment and sewerage plant and is connected to grid power with a stand by generator. Initiatives introduced to Binna Burra included water conservation and efficient waste management measures, redesigned building services with efficient cost saving alternatives, a selection of super efficient room appliances and lighting alternatives and super efficient motors installed for pumps, refrigeration and air-conditioning. Every opportunity was also explored to maximize water efficiency and a range of technologies and procedures were introduced. In addition, technologies and practices were introduced to maximize water collection and reuse. Outcomes resulted in considerable reductions in energy costs of approximately 30%, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and water demand reduced by 50%

Vatulele Island Resort Fiji

Since opening in 1990, Vatulele has developed an enviable reputation in every corner of the globe. Set on a magnificent lagoon, the beauty of the site is coupled with a unique architectural style. The resort is located on Vatulele Island located about 25 minutes flying time from Nadi Airport. The island is mostly covered with dense jungle and is surrounded by a spectacular reef. Vatulele consists of 18 Grand Bures and utilizes its own diesel power generation supplemented by solar and a wind generation system. Eco-efficient initiatives included a wind generation system, waste heat recovery used to heat both spa pools and to supply hot water throughout the resort, energy efficient lighting throughout, the installation of water conservation measures and advanced controls on refrigeration. Passive use of solar energy in buildings is also a feature including orientation, glazing, shading and insulation. Outcomes for Vatulele included primary energy use down by 60%, greenhouse gas emissions down by 46 tonnes, \$65,000 annual operating cost savings and water demand down by 25%.

Conclusion

The above case studies demonstrate that ecological sustainability and cost effective development can go hand in hand. When all factors are taken into account, renewable energy and demand management measures will form part of an energy solution that is ecologically sustainable and cost effective and substantial greenhouse gas reductions can be achieved with current technologies based on a system design. Performance based evaluation of energy sustainability will provide consumers with the assurance that ecotourism operators are based on sustainable energy management practices.

The coconut crab is the largest of all land dwelling crustaceans, reaching weights in excess of 5kg.

Once widely distributed in the Indo-Pacific, their ease of capture, and the destruction of their habitats, are now threatening their survival.



The coconut crab, *Birgus latro*, is related to other hermit crabs, but, except as very small juveniles, they do not live in empty sea-snail (gastropod) shells.

Coconut crabs are distributed in tropical islands from the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean to the Tuamotu Archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. The crabs require the protection of crevices, caves, and hollow tree stumps, and are common only in coastal forest areas where there is a complete cover of bush. The clearing of bush and the introduction of livestock has contributed to the disappearance of coconut crabs from continental countries.

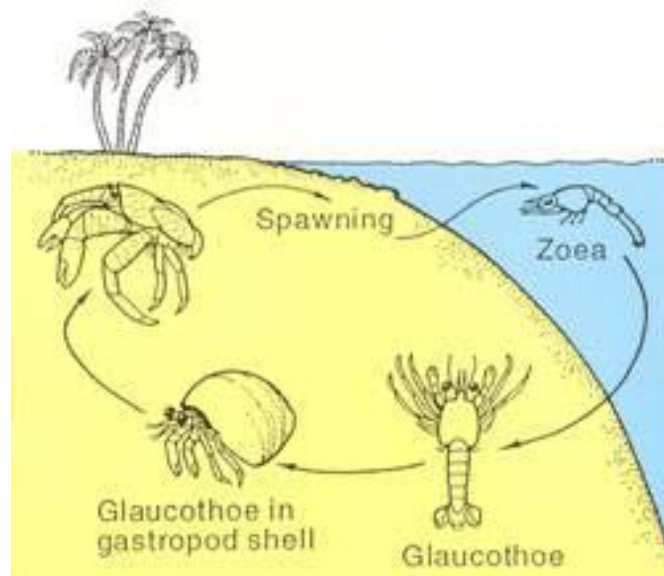
Adult coconut crabs are well adapted to life on land and, in ideal habitat conditions, may live up to 4 km inland from the sea. When their populations are low, coconut crabs usually move about at night. When their populations are large, however, they also hunt food by day to reduce the number of encounters between individuals.

The crabs are scavengers, eating fruit, rotting leaves and other animals, including other coconut crabs. The massive crushing claws of a large adult coconut crab allow it to open and eat fallen coconuts, although their survival is not dependent on these as a food source. Although the adults live on land and drown if kept in water, they require access to seawater, which they drink to maintain the salt level of their body fluids (their osmotic balance).

As in other crustaceans, coconut crabs can only grow by periodically casting off their hard shells in a process known as moulting. The old hard shell is cast off, and the crab expands before its newly-formed soft shell hardens. The crabs generally moult once per year in underground burrows during the dry season, and large crabs take over one month to complete the moulting process.

The increase in size after each moult is not large especially in older crabs, and this is thought to be related to the difficulties of moulting on land. Consequently, coconut crabs grow slowly. Male crabs take 10 years to reach 9 cm, which is the legal minimum size of capture in Vanuatu, and over 30 years to reach their maximal length of 16 cm (5kg weight). After sexual maturity, females grow even more slowly than the males, and few are found larger than 10cm.

Coconut crabs become sexually mature when they reach about 22-25mm in thoracic length, at approximately 6 years of age. Copulation takes place on land, and each mature female probably spawns once a year between December and March.



Eggs, which are carried under the female crab's tail (abdomen) for about 3 weeks, are initially bright orange but darken in colour during the gestation period. The eggs are released into the ocean at dusk, generally coinciding with a high tide and the dark phase of the moon. The eggs hatch immediately upon release from the female and progress through several larval stages which drift in the sea for 2 to 3 weeks. The final (glaucothoe) larval stage must find and enter a suitable sea-shell in which it emerges from the ocean to live amongst the coral rubble of the intertidal zone.

Once the glaucothoe reaches approximately 5 mm in length a further metamorphosis to a juvenile coconut crab occurs when it dispenses with using a snail shell for protection. The juvenile lives in burrows to avoid potential predators including other larger coconut crabs. As it grows, the juvenile adopts a more terrestrial habit, and moves further inland.

The usual method for capturing coconut crabs is by placing opened coconuts during the day along a previously used trail. These trails are revisited after dark, and the coconut crabs, attracted by the prospect of an easy meal, are captured. Local stock sizes can be determined using the catch rate as an index of abundance.

Coconut crabs have now disappeared over much of their previous range. Their ease of capture, and the destruction of their habitats, are now threatening their survival. An intensive research programme, sponsored by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, is aimed at the conservation, management and potential for farming of the species.

Source: The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research in collaboration with the Vanuatu Fisheries Department, Port Vila, Vanuatu.

The Dilemma!

With the serious decline of coconut crabs in some islands of Vanuatu, and the potential eradication of this creature, many resorts, hotels, and restaurants have removed coconut crabs from their menu.

This is not such a problem in the outer islands of Vanuatu as tourism numbers are small and the coconut crab provides much needed income to the villagers. However, if you care about the survival of the species, there are other and more interesting choices.

It would be encouraging to see the creation of coconut crab habitats for travellers to enjoy viewing this awesome creature in their natural environment rather than consuming them (after all, they are quite bland to eat hence are always smothered with one sauce or another).

To construct a coconut crab habitat, you will need around 20M² plus enclosure. Contact me for further details. There are building and maintenance guidelines to follow.
John Nicholls.

Four questions to Len Cordiner, CEO of WorldHotel-Link



What differentiates WHL in the online travel booking space?

"In many respects WHL is doing the same job as existing giants in the industry such as Expedia, Travelocity, Orbitz or Hostelworld. However, there is one critical difference- WHL

has local people on the ground in every destination serviced, and the others don't.

Lonely Planet, who are now an affiliate partner of WHL, estimated this year that of the 6,000 accommodation providers they recommend around the world in their travel guides, 47% could not be booked on-line. And most of these are in the developing world, and almost all are small and medium scale operators.

In WHL's case, the local owners/operators of the booking business (WHL's franchisees) collect, load and maintain the content and act as the interface between travellers and the local accommodation and tour providers."

What progress has been made in rolling out WHL?

"Since beginning commercial sales just a year ago we now have over 80 destinations sold and a further 20 or so in discussion. We've also been helped by the fact that Lonely Planet signed up as an affiliate marketing partner in March this year."

Several of your destination sites are benefiting from IFC Technical Assistance and support from other groups such as SNV, GTZ, and USAID etc. How important is this to your business?

"It is critical! This year alone, around 40% of our sites will have benefited from some level of support from the IFC and others. Most of these sites are in very difficult regions where quite a lot of effort has been required at the destination to introduce the whole idea of the internet, online bookings and the independent traveller market to the industry.

The money and TA goes to supporting the local travel service providers and the owners/operators of the booking sites."

Why a sustainable tourism approach?

"To our knowledge the WHL **Caring for the Destination** ratings are the first internet and traveller-driven model out there for sustainable tourism. This would not be so interesting were it not for the fact that other approaches to getting sustainable tourism occurring, especially at the Small/Medium Enterprise (SME) level, have largely failed. The norm till now has been the use of industry codes or standards, with inspection or auditing by experts to assess compliance. It hasn't worked.

WHL decided, as an internet company dealing with SMEs, to try an eBay approach to this problem. There is a lot of research to suggest that a sizeable number of travelers would prefer to use travel providers who support the local environment and local communities. This opens up an interesting marketing opportunity for suppliers doing something which is positive for the local destination. We call this **Caring for the Destination** and we include this information on the web site of the provider."

Source: International Finance Corporation, Outcomes Newsletter, Fall 2006.

Business Philosophy

"Never discount your product or service once you have created it, make it better and better. Improve it, innovate it, add value, attach goodwill to it, support it with the best people to service and sell it. In other words, grow it!

A business is a virtual organism which continues to expand. Invest all of yourself, if you're not going to, another will do it for theirs, then another and soon, you have competition. A good business does not have competition only imitators. Be the best you can be at what you do; lead never follow. Re-invest continually into its physical and emotional resonance with its best friend; the customer, and keep him informed. That relationship is its only purpose to exist, one founded on trust and loyalty, never cheapened, never confused. If you're not having fun doing it, then rethink your vocation...." Anon.

Holding on to Staff

It takes a lot more than money to ensure a hotel keeps its best people, and the buck stops at the line managers.

Losing too many good people?

The costs incurred when good staff leave include direct expenses such as the out-of-pocket cost of recruiting, interviewing, and training a replacement; and indirect costs such as the effect on workload, morale and customer satisfaction.

Will other employees consider quitting and be coerced to join their departed colleagues to the competition? There are also opportunity costs, including the knowledge that is lost (which goes to your competition) and the work that does not get done while managers and other employees focus on filling the slot and bringing the replacement up to speed.

Replacing an employee can cost twice the departed worker's annual salary.

Who is responsible?

The manager or the proprietor (M/P). In the past, M/P could mostly assume they were not responsible. Employees left because they did not like the hotel or because they had found a better job, or they left to accompany a colleague and the hotel who may be offering better training, working conditions, career advancements.

The M/P's typical reaction – a shrug and a “what are you going to do?” – was not a problem when departures were few and replacements plentiful. Now that skilled staff shortage is a real problem and will develop to be a major one for the Vanuatu accommodation sector; different approaches have to be employed.

People leave jobs for all the old reasons and a host of new ones. They are going out on their own. A headhunter has called, and a competitor is offering a fat “golden hello”. Whatever the immediate cause, something had to happen to make the employee even consider leaving. A key reason people do consider leaving is that a particular boss did not do what was needed to keep them.

Research consistently shows that the M/P plays a significant role in influencing an employee's commitment level and retention. Similarly, the Australian Gallup Organisation's multi-year study of 80,000 managers in 400 companies found that an employee's relationship with his or her direct boss is more important for retention than hotel policies such as pay and perks.

What can managers do to keep as many good employees as possible?

The steps are numerous, but they fall into three broad categories: they must create a great working environment, create great jobs and ask valued staff what is needed to keep them.

What does it take to create a great working environment? M/P often assume that it is determined by company policies and corporate culture. It is to an extent, but policies can be circumvented or changed because, ultimately, the atmosphere in a department or unit is more important to individual employees than the culture of the hotel/resort as a whole.

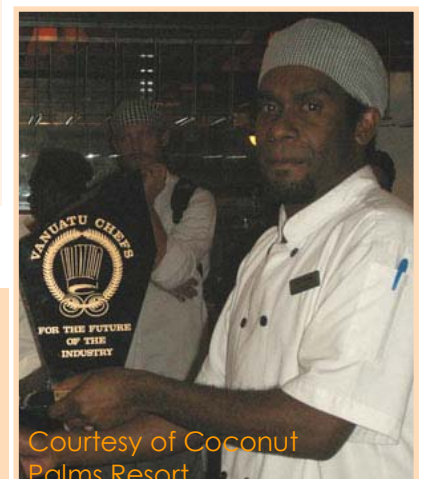
M/Ps need ordinary human virtues such as courtesy and respect, plus the recognition that workplaces are social settings. M/Ps who take an interest in employees can engender an appealing atmosphere.

Loyalty to hotels may be disappearing, but loyalty to colleagues is not.

Freely dispensed information – about the business, about financial performances, about strategies and plans – tells employees that they can be trusted with the data, and that the company respects their ability to understand and contribute to the business as a whole.

The hotel may not be completely open-book, but M/Ps can share what they know about its strategic direction and internal workings.

Amos Ronnie, Chef at Coconut Palms Resort (ex Wild Pig): winner of the Chef of the Year Award at the Salon Culinaire 2006.



Tourists keep heads in the sand

By Lucy Siegle, *The Observer*, UK, March 2006

I sat next to a travel bore at a wedding recently who showed me pictures of coral reefs on his mobile phone. He described the exclusive eco-resort in mind-numbing detail. The punch line being that on day five he bumped into his cleaner. His premise was that you can go to the ends of the earth these days, and still have to hang out with your staff, but it did emphasise the democratisation of travel, particularly of the far-flung destination. There's no such thing as the jet set anymore, or if there is, we're all in it.

Figures for 2004 bear this out. The World Tourism Organisation estimates that there were 760 million outbound trips of one night or more worldwide - up 9 per cent on the previous year - and a total spend of almost £350 billion, a 12 per cent increase year on year. Over the next 10 years, travel and tourism are expected to grow by an average of 4.5 per cent annually, particularly in the Asian market, which is set to boom. By 2014, that will amount to a global market of more than \$9.5 trillion, adding nearly \$7 trillion to the world's GDP and employing 260 million people.

This prognosis leaves the travel industry, often described as 'beleaguered' or 'battered', feeling pretty optimistic, but it's enough to keep environmentalists and climate change experts awake at night. Meanwhile, it's left to an alternative travel industry to create a model for a more sustainable form of tourism. It began with eco-tourism, which broadly suggested that tourists should minimise their ecological holiday footprint by being less profligate with resources - the energy, water, food and other resources of the average Mediterranean holidaymaker amounts to half the 'fair share' of their natural resources for the entire year - and staying in resorts that would conserve important ecosystems, rather than parasitically feeding from them.

Responsible tourism is eco-tourism's more contemporary spirited cousin. **Responsible Travel** (www.responsibletravel.com) sells 'holidays that give the world a break' and it's this kind of ethical stance, researching environmental and social inequity, which is proving to be a hit with the consumer.

In fact, the market for 'responsible travel' is growing at an estimated three times the industry rate and is predicted to corner 5 per cent (or £1bn) of the market in the next 10 to 20 years.

This year the Responsible Travel Awards also introduced a best mode of transport award, which went to Eurostar for its low-emissions alternative to flying and because 60 per cent of passengers take public transport to Waterloo. It shows that there is at least a growing awareness about the link between responsible tourism and its contribution to global warming.

It's a problem that an increasing band of travellers try to remedy by offsetting carbon emissions caused by their flights. 'It is our view that while the technologies that will allow us to travel abroad in a totally sustainable fashion are still being developed, it is better that people take responsibility for the own emissions (and gain some idea of the impact on the climate that their life has) by offsetting them to make their travel as sustainable as possible,' says Jim Peacock from Future Forests, the UK's leading carbon neutral company.

'This is a practical step where reductions are not yet possible and helps not only to support sustainable forestry projects around the world but also puts money into new renewable energy and efficiency projects that are helping to reduce emissions at source in developing countries,' he adds.

It's a theme that has also been adopted by some tour operators, Crystal Holidays, for example, suggests contributions from customers (£5 for European holidays, £10 for North America and £15 for south America) which is then invested in an energy-saving project in the United Kingdom, and a sapling will be planted in a UK forest for each passenger who participates.

It's a thought, but is that all it is? Research suggests that the sink function of trees could be much less than originally thought. What happens if the trees die prematurely or are burned in a forest fire? And there's a strong argument that carbon offsetting of this kind legitimises unsustainable behaviour.

Tourists keep heads in the sand (cont'd)

All of which brings us squarely back to flights, and soaring passenger numbers. The distance flown by UK travellers has almost doubled between 1990 and 2000, from 125 billion kilometres to 260 billion kilometres. It is hardly surprising that the biggest tour operators aren't moving too fast to quell these new impulses. The holiday business model has already been severely tested over the last five years. While overall, global travel continues to boom, traditional tour operators have been damaged by internet travel culture, with customers attracted by the price 'visibility' of online bookings and budget carriers. Ninety million Europeans took a two-week package holiday in 2003, 10 per cent below figures for the year before.

A series of mergers, which was referred to in some quarters as a kind of 'internal cannibalisation', has resulted in the appearance of the big five - the major tour operators in Europe: TUI, Thomas Cook, First Choice, MyTravel and Kuoni. Hoovering up other tour operators means that Thomas Cook, for instance, has added three airlines during the period, meaning smaller, less efficient aircraft, many flying below capacity.

No main tour operator, then, is likely to want to take a lead on minimising its customers' contribution to global warming. 'Thomas Cook takes environmental issues seriously,' stresses a company spokesman, 'but with mixed reports on the potential implications of climate change no formal plans are in place at the moment. It is currently too early to assess the likely business impact.'

The company is one of the founding partners of The Travel Foundation, the first charity of its kind to focus on protecting popular holiday destinations.

Holidaymakers are asked to make a £1 voluntary donation to The Foundation when booking a Thomas Cook Tour Operating holiday through a third-party travel agent. Scratchcards are also sold on the airline, and profits from these also go towards the charity'.

But, with the best will in the world, scratchcards and £1 voluntary contributions don't seem to be the type of radical action needed, given that the Department for Transport forecasts that by 2030 aircraft fuelled at UK airports alone could have a global-warming impact equivalent to 200-300 million tons of CO2 a year. Neither does this business-almost-as-usual approach tally with the more alarmist predictions of tourism personnel elsewhere. 'Given the growing scientific data, my fear is we're all going to wake up soon and find the places we love totally gone - even in our lifetime,' says Jerry Mallett, the president of the International Adventure Travel Society, based in the US. 'Global warming is a train wreck about to hit the world tourism business, and I think we've all been asleep at the switch.'

The really horrible irony is that ultimately, global warming threatens to destroy tourism as we know it anyway. A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report projects warming scenarios with negative implications for all kinds of travel, from bird-watching and walking tours to winter destinations (less snow), less fishing and less white-water rafting.

The report suggests sea-level rise could reach as high as 3ft by 2100, when a rise of only half that could wreak havoc on global seaside resorts and ports as seawater erodes beaches, floods property and pollutes potable water. It remains to be seen whether the threat to that most beloved holiday destination, the beach, will be enough to encourage tourists and tour operators to take their heads out of the sand.



Gaua Isld. Angels



Travel Companies 'Driving Away Customers' Due to Poor Online User Experience

Online travel companies (and their clients) are missing out on bookings and actively encouraging users to visit rival websites, new research claims to show.

A study of more than 25 travel websites revealed that hidden charges, cumbersome search functions and booking forms that are hard to find are among the top mistakes made by some of the UK's biggest online travel agencies.

According to web usability consultancy Webcredible the study provides "unique insights" into common errors made by online travel companies and reveals the main reasons why holidaymakers might click away from a travel website.

These include:

- Hitting them with extra taxes and charges at the checkout
- Not allowing them to be flexible with their dates
- Not using 'print-friendly' page layouts
- Not promoting competitive prices on the home page

The report provides advice on changes travel companies can make to their websites to encourage repeat visits increase conversion rates. Company director Trenton Moss said: "The travel sector experiences one of the highest levels of comparison shopping online, with a massive one in four visits to travel websites coming from another site in the same category. "Users are unlikely to hang around for long if they can't find what they're looking for."

Do the on-line websites representing your property or tour have these problems?

Source: *Phil Davies, Travelmole;*

<http://www.webcredible.co.uk/travel>

Global Tourism Trends

So what future for Beach Tourism??

This may come as a surprise to many, but tourist behavioural patterns are beginning to display a 'general weariness' with the mass tourism coastal product. The emergence of new destinations and the development of different forms of holidays have served to re-focus tourist aspirations and expectations. Tourists are demanding more and more 'experience based' tourism, which Beach Tourism as a stand-alone product, cannot offer.

Around the world many famous beach resorts have faced periods of decline (Hawaii and Australia's Gold Coast are but two) and are placing great efforts into rejuvenating the destination so as to bring about repeat visitation.

Research suggests that seaside developments may only provide a coastal locality with an initial advantage. They may be copied easily by other competing destinations, or they may become out-dated and unfashionable as a result of changes in tourist tastes and preferences.

There is a continuing persistence in the development of mass tourism seaside resorts. This emerging shift in tourism consumption means that coastal environments will need to implement continuous and innovative regeneration strategies if they are to successfully compete with other destinations and provide the visitor with sufficient reasons to visit their resort.

Vanuatu's naturally occurring Small Beach Boutique Resort development (under 30 rooms/fares) is well positioned to pick up the Mass Beach Market drop-outs.

Source: *Travelmole.com*

"Life challenges us with the fact that everything can be done better."...Anon



Gaua Island

The Hospitality “Good Practices” Guide to Sustainable Tourism Part IV : Waste Management

What is the Issue?

Hotels produce large quantities of solid waste, from packaging to food scraps to cleaning and maintenance materials, some of which is toxic. In many cases, this waste is collected in badly designed waste dumps, discarded directly into oceans or rivers, or simply dumped in areas out of sight of guests. In addition to visually degrading a destination, improper waste disposal can lead to water and soil pollution through leaching of contaminants from waste piles. Poorly designed waste dumps can result in fires, odours, flies, rat infestation, diseases, and ineffective containment of wastes.

Uncontrolled disposal of toxic items such as paint cans and batteries can severely contaminate water, air and soil resources, threatening the environment and human health. Even where waste is disposed of legally, land fills have limited capacity, which is a particular problem on small islands.



“Well done is better than well said.”...Benjamin Franklin


Why Should I care?

- An effective waste management program can reduce hauling and disposal fees.
- Reuse and recycling of products can cut product purchasing costs.
- Improper or illegal waste disposal may lead to significant fines and clean-up costs.
- Proper waste disposal may limit the risk of litigation from guests or area residents who become ill from hazardous wastes.
- Effective waste management can protect a hotel's image by limiting visual degradation of the area and enhancing approval from guests. The visible effects of waste disposal, is the most mentioned concern by guests regarding their holiday destinations.
- Waste dumped directly into oceans or rivers can decrease the quality of tourism resources by reducing fish populations and making the water unsuitable for recreational activities.

Economic Impact of tourism in Vanuatu

- Up to 75% of foreign exchange, 51% of GDP and 12% of formal employment comes from tourism.
 - Tourism spend in the region (SPTO countries) conservatively estimates at US\$1.52b in 2004.
 - For every US\$1m of tourist expenditure an average of US\$660,000 is spent locally on salaries, supplies and services in the region.
 - Average retention of expenditure is approximately 54%.
 - Departure tax alone generated US\$20m for South Pacific governments in 2004.
- Source: SPTO 2005 report*

What Can I Do?

- Begin by reviewing the types and quantities of waste produced and current disposal methods and costs.
 - Develop your solid waste management program around the three R's: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.
- 
- **REDUCE:** Buy products in bulk and with less packaging, to reduce waste generation.
 - **REUSE:**
 - Replace disposable items with reusable ones, such as rechargeable batteries, refillable soap and shampoo containers and cloth laundry bags.
 - Require vendors to take back pallets and crates.
 - **RECYCLE:**
 - Separate waste at the source, rather than having to go through all the trash after it is collected. For example, provide containers for recyclables in guest rooms and compost bins in kitchen work areas.
 - Where there is a market for recyclables, recycle items such as paper, glass, metal and plastic.
 - Compost organic wastes such as cardboard boxes, newspapers, food scraps, lawn cuttings, leaves and tree cuttings.
 - Provide waste bins for your guests in key areas, particularly by the beach and along nature trails.
 - Keep solid waste in a safe, sanitary holding place until it is picked up by the municipality or other disposal entities.
 - Work with other businesses and organizations and the local municipality to support the development of efficient waste separation, collection, recycling and treatment systems.

Where Can I Get More Information?

A Manual for Waste Management: What the Tourism Industry Can Do to Improve its Performance. United Nations Environment Programme, 2003. Available at: <http://www.unep.org>

Benchmark Hotel program. <http://www.benchmarkhotel.com>

Environmental Action Pack for Hotels, International Hotel & Restaurant Association, International Hotels Environment Initiative, United Nations Environment Programme, Industry and Environment, 1995. Available at: <http://www.unep.org>

Green Hotelier Magazine. International Hotels Environment Initiative. Available at: <http://www.ihei.org>

Waste Audit Manual for Caribbean Hotels & Resorts: A Guide to a Greener Environmentally Sound Property. Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism. Available at <http://www.cha-cast.com>

Good Practices in Action

At **Couran Cove Eco Tourism Resort** in Australia, organic wastes are shredded, composted for several weeks and then fed to the worms at the resort's worm farm. The worms produce a rich product that is used in the resort's gardens instead of fertilizer. This system reduces waste and eliminates the costs of removing trash from the island.

The recycling program at the **Banff Springs Hotel**, in Canada, has cut waste by more than 85 percent.

Since 1998, the **Novotel NorthBeach** in Australia has recycled, on average per week, 5000 kg of glass, 500 kg of cardboard, 700 kg of paper, 100 kg of plastic and 1500 kg of organic waste which is sent to farmers.

Adapted from: *A Practical Guide to Good Practice* by J. Sweeting & Amy Rosenfield, The Centre for Environmental Leadership in Business.

**"Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him."
Aldus Huxley, Author.**

The Customer From Hell Has a New Weapon!

Travel companies are being warned to keep a close eye on the growing popularity of websites promoting user-generated content. According to research published by Nielsen/NetRatings, these types of websites have become the fastest-growing online brands in the UK this year. But experts say companies should keep a close eye on this trend, in case their customers post items that reflect badly on their business.

Mark Higgins, at national law firm Betesh Fox, says: "Travel companies must keep up to date with internet trends so they can protect themselves from holidaymakers with a grievance or embarrassing footage that could bring their company into disrepute.

"Peer-to-peer interaction is not governed by revenue, it's governed by the interests of the people who post on the website and this is where the popularity arises.

"Companies have been caught out by people posting negative stories about their business in online diaries or blogs but this new generation of interactive website allows users to post videos taken from camcorders and mobile phones. "Holiday companies are particularly vulnerable to this kind of activity. It can only take one upset holidaymaker to upload a video of his so-called 'holiday from hell' to ruin the reputation of a company. "Once it's up there online it's very difficult to get it removed."

Source: *Bev Fearis, Travel writer.*

Journals for the travel and tourism industry

Here is a listing of journals and periodicals useful for people in the trade or for anyone studying travel and tourism courses.

ABTA magazine
ABTA Business Travel
Air Transport Management
Air Transport World
Airline Business
Airline Industry Information – All
ATOL Business
Annals of Tourism Research
Asia Pacific Analyst
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism
Research
Australasian Analyst
Business Travel News Asia-Pacific
Current issues in Tourism
Flight International
FVW International
In Focus
Information Technology and Tourism
International Journal of Hospitality
and Tourism Administration

International Journal of Tourism
Research
Journal of Conference & Exhibition Management
Journal of Ecotourism
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research
Journal of Sport Tourism
Journal of Sustainable Tourism
Journal of Sustainable Travel and Tourism
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism
Journal of Vacation Marketing
Pacific Tourism Review
Scandinavian Journal for Hospitality and Tourism
Tourism and Hospitality Research
Tourism Analysis
Tourism Analyst
Tourism, Culture & Communication
Tourism Economics
Tourism Geographies
Tourism Management
Tourism Recreation Research
Tourism Today
Tourism Journal
Tourist Studies
Travel and Tourism Analyst
Traveltrade

Source: *Travelmole, www.travelmole.com.*

"The only function that one experience can perform is to lead into another experience." William James, Philosopher.

Marketing Tip

City Business

In order to be able to sell something, you have to have a customer. In order to have more than one customer, you have to create traffic.

Generating and increasing traffic raises your odds of selling more things.

Creating traffic through your Restaurant and Bar, Coffee shop, or any other business is critical.

For example; there are thousands of travellers walking the streets of Port Vila any week. This number is doubled on cruise ship days.

At least half that number need to go to the bathroom when in town. Yet all Food and Beverage outlets that have their own WC's are exclusively for use by their patrons.

The two public toilets available in Port Vila (user pays system) are too few and too far apart for tourists. Imagine the publicity worth and traffic generated if a Food and Beverage operator or any other retail business for that matter, in the city placed a sign in the front of their outlet "Free use of WC's, Restrooms". Cost of WC paper, liquid hand soap and paper towels would easily be counteracted by the sales generated and it's cheaper than advertising! High number of people using the free service would either feel they should buy something out of gratitude or would spread the word that that establishment is a "saviour" in times of need; creating a high goodwill factor to the establishment. When word got around, there would be a queue to get in...that's traffic! All you have to do then is to convert traffic into sales.

Whacky idea? Why do large department stores such as Myers, David Jones etc., in Australia have well known public toilets on the top floors of their buildings? – So that the customer traffic is directed through the whole store increasing the opportunity of customer purchase along their journey up and down from their destination.

But most importantly, people remember your name when you were there in their hour of need....

Extract the Extrovert Guest

Find out (registration form) if any of your guests have any special talents – comedians, musically talented, cooking, artists etc., and do a contra deal with them – an FOC dinner or room night for a performance in your establishment. Go even further, advertise it on your website – ask them to send you their talent profile then offer them a deal...win win situation for all.

Relationship Building Results in Repeat Business

Mass market products (wholesalers) have little chance of competing in this area, therefore they market on price and convenience. **The primary relationship that they market is that between consumer and product, rather than the consumer and the vendor.**

Realising that today's consumer feels more de-personalised and insecure than ever, your prospects are looking for a welcoming relationship when they make a purchase; including business – to – business purchases (Hence one of the reasons for increased direct client to hotel bookings via your website).

Social researcher Hugh Mackay, author of Reinventing Australia says; "When dealing with any kind of service provider, people want to be treated as though the relationship is personal rather than commercial." When they are treated decently, people go back for more of the same; the hotly contested ground is repeat business! Everybody knows that instant business only gives a one-shot chance to make a profit, whereas customers who come back are worth 10-20 times more.

Fun Things to Do

If you have a pool in your hotel/resort introduce water aerobics before breakfast. Take photos of it; put it into your website. Display your "wellbeing" destination credentials.... Done well, it is a winner.

Official Tourism Sites Command Attention

More than 55% of respondents in a consumer survey who visited 11 official tourism destination web sites later visited the destinations.

Sail Leah Woolford, CEO of USDM: "These high conversion rates and strong economic impact figures indicate how effective these official local tourism offices are at delivering the destination information that motivates consumers to visit."

These sites can effectively compete against the multi-million dollar advertising budgets of the large travel web sites, she added. The 2005 Tourism Economic Impact Report included feedback from more than 54,000 survey participants.

Source: Report by David Wilkening. www.travelmole.com.

Pacific News

Islands sign up to protect cetaceans

Nine Pacific Islands, which include Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa and Vanuatu, signed a new international framework during the SPREP Environment Ministers Meeting to conserve Pacific Island whales and dolphins (cetaceans) and their habitats, reports the *Pacific Magazine* (15 September 2006).

Signatories agreed to cooperate and reinforce efforts to protect and conserve all whales and dolphins in the Pacific Islands Region, including the coastal and high seas habitats of whales and dolphins. Signatories will undertake more training, research and monitoring, and work towards sustainable and responsible cetacean based tourism.

Source: Travelmole, www.travelmole.com

Staff Motivator

When your business has a good month, place a phone card in their pay slip with a note from the boss (the value of the phone card indicates how successful the month was). A good motivator!

Don't forget; find the answers on SPTO's website – www.PacificToolkit.org

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Note to Contributors: If you wish to contribute to Tourism & Hospitality e-info, please email submission in Word or plain text format to John at info@vanuatu-hotels.vu. Acknowledgement will be given to all submissions and we reserve the right to prioritize the publication schedules for articles submitted. We will endeavour to publish all submissions as soon as is possible after receipt, but this will depend on the volume of submissions received. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

This Newsletter is published by John and Silvana Nicholls of Vanuatu Hotels; phone: +678 24444, for the Vanuatu Tourism Industry. All photography by ©John Nicholls. Contents of this newsletter are in the context of Vanuatu Tourism at the time of issue and may not be relevant to other tourism destinations. Vanuatu Hotels is a franchisee of Worldhotel-link.com.

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