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Alexander warns again of potential downturn

TOURISM will continue with slow growth. But this is countered in the backpacker sector by increased competition as new entrants put pressure on prices and service standards, says BNZ chief economist Tony Alexander. Writing in the latest *BNZ Weekly Overview* he adds: "Several new backpacker establishments with 300-400 beds are paying leases of \$1.2 million or more per year. A lot of bums in beds just to pay the man, let alone staff etc and margin. Big increase in new consents (are) being issued in (the) backpacker sector, and some fall-out (is) predicted in Auckland at least."

He says the industry is feeling the effect of the high dollar. Travellers are also arriving on lower priced airfares but without money to spend on attractions and products, purchasing lower end merchandise rather than the higher end products.

Since December there has been an eight to 10 percent downturn in the liquor industry. Gaming is down 20 percent but there's been no change in the food sector. "Petrol price rises will only worsen the situation."

Mr Alexander adds: "Incoming tourists are spreading the word about much higher prices in NZ. Rising interest rates, dollar, inflation, and falling tourism numbers are not good indications for the business I am in..." Also see *IT536*.

Luhrs spells out industry priorities

DEVELOPING industry capability in staff recruitment, skills development and retention are priorities facing the industry, TIANZ CEO, Fiona Luhrs told a seminar at Victoria University on Wednesday.

She said other priorities include effective industry involvement in conservation management, greater central and local government investment in local

infrastructure and improvement in understanding quality standards and environmental sustainability.

There's also a need for greater advocacy for appropriate resources for offshore marketing, the development of partnering projects and developing business capability that maximises performance and returns - and industry leadership in destination management.

Under challenges Ms Luhrs said we have to continually improve our product and services as we have little that

is truly unique, while offshore marketing competition is increasing. She flagged that under the Kyoto Protocol energy costs will rise from 2007 and our competitiveness will become an issue relative to non-Kyoto countries.

Carbon taxes might apply to international air travel from 2012.

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TEN years ago in IT...

TOP performing holiday parks can make almost as much money as some of the most profitable hotels, according to a survey carried out by Waikato University in conjunction with the Society of Accountants.

Of 13 parks surveyed, the best return more than 13 percent profit on average, whilst the top among 19 hotels surveyed made less than two percent profit.

Net profit before tax and proprietor salaries qs \$103,091 for parks and \$109,609 for top hotels.

WELLINGTON'S James Cook Centra may be the first hotel in the world to hold opera shows. PR manager Peter Sayers says the hotel has identified a niche market that wants salon operas.

WANGANUI'S greatest potential in international tourism comes from the German speaking markets of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, says NZTB (now TNZ) marketing manager Miles Wilson. The area has the product for FIT seeking quiet areas in a rural setting.

JOINT ventures between government and industry are proving so successful that NZTB CEO Ian Kean hopes other NTOs don't catch on to what we are up to!

Some 181 joint ventures have been set up since the scheme was launched in 1991. Industry has contributed \$72 million in the past four years. This has resulted in \$990 million in foreign exchange as a result of 296,000 extra passengers being attracted here.

TOURISM Auckland is to retain its City of Sails theme. But to pull the region together "Altogether Brilliant" is also to be used.

TWELVE innovative tourism developments are proposed for southern Lake Taupo, in a report by consultant Christine McElwee. Recommendations include redeveloping the historic Tokaanu wharf, a Tuwharetoa visitor centre, Tokaanu accommodation precinct development, a wildlife sanctuary, an indoor recreation complex for Turangi, extending facilities at the National Trout centre, revamping and extending facilities at the Tokaanu Thermal Baths.

NEW Zealand Duty Free lost \$710,000 in the last six months, based on turnover of \$2.29 million.

REPUTEDLY the world's first interactive CD-ROM directory of New Zealand education and tourism is being released by Australian publishers Megabooks.

Lowry delighted with Minister's comments in IT

ITOC CEO Peter Lowry says he was delighted to read in *IT*536 that Tourism Minister Mark Burton would like all inbound operators to meet the council's standards. "ITOC is addressing this issue as their number one goal for 2005," he tells us.

"It is not easy being self-regulated and it takes a lot of time and energy to administer our quality standards and strict membership, financial and best practice criteria." He adds: "Some members feel the cost of compliance is considerable, especially when unprofessional tour operators who meet no standards sell New Zealand short and do not give their customers a value added quality visitor experience."

ITOC has asked TIANZ, TNZ, NZHC and government to join it in addressing the situation, particularly in the China and Korean markets. "We must together find solutions."

Creative workshops set to take off

CREATIVE Tourism of Nelson has produced a brochure which details excellent workshops which are ideal for travellers in town for a few days. They enable visitors to make their own souvenirs!

Under "taste" there's a workshop on New Zealand seafoods every Friday, an organic brewing and bbq workshop on Wednesdays, a halfday workshop on olive oil available weekdays and a similar length workshop on pavlova making on weekends. On Mondays there's a workshop on wine making.

"Art" includes pottery and bone carving lessons Mondays to Saturdays, felt making on Fridays and Saturdays and wood creations on weekends. But no doubt the most popular will be the Maori related workshops which include basket weaving on Wednesdays and Fridays, marae visits, workshops on Maori kai and how to perform the haka from Mondays to Fridays. Also available is a one day workshop which involves bushwalking and Maori medicine.

Described as a "once in a lifetime" experience is a two day workshop on a marae. This costs \$650 while the workshops are from \$55 to \$190 which covers materials and often transport. *IT* is told the concept will shortly go nationwide. Contact: 03-5480250, 0800-408020, info@creativetourism.co.nz or www.creativetourism.co.nz.

Convention centre for Blenheim?

WHETHER a convention centre is feasible for Destination Marlborough will be discussed at an industry meeting in Blenheim on March 22. Details: pyeo@destinationmarlborough.com.

Millions into Christchurch

MORE than \$17 million was spent refurbishing Christchurch hotels last year. Other tourism infrastructure has seen substantial investment, with \$20 million going on Christchurch International Airport.

**by NZTE tourism project
director Alex Matheson**

TOURISM is among New Zealand's fastest growing industries, and international tourism is currently our largest foreign exchange earner. Its continued success is crucial to New Zealand's overall economic performance.

Establishing a successful and sustainable tourism operation to take advantage of the growing international tourism market can take patience as well as resources.

Time

Time is required to build a network of valuable contacts within the industry, identify and evaluate potential partners here and overseas, and establish local awareness of products and services. Many firms starting up in the tourism industry will require two to three years to build a solid business foundation before an acceptable return on their investment.

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

Building tourism sector capability - NZTE's role

(NZTE) is the government's national economic development agency. Through its network of 48 offices worldwide NZTE aims to grow New Zealand's economy by building the capability of businesses and regions and facilitating their participation in profitable overseas markets.

Focus

NZTE's role is to focus on industries and sectors in which New Zealand has a long-term sustainable advantage and on companies with high-growth potential. NZTE aims to achieve this by: engaging in activities that build business capability; improving New Zealand's business environment for enterprise and growth; increasing the international connections of New Zealand businesses.

Relevant

NZTE has been working with key stakeholders in the industry to ensure that the programmes and services it provides are relevant to, and valued by the sector. It is seeking to complement the projects that have come out of the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 recommendations and industry initiatives such as Qualmark and TIANZ's industry development

programmes, and align its engagement with the sector to Tourism New Zealand's strategic approach.

Preliminary research by NZTE suggests that, for many New Zealand tourism businesses, there is an opportunity to increase profitability beyond current levels through greater collaboration and by managing yield and pricing more effectively.

Capabilities

Towards this end, NZTE's principal role in the sector is to develop the capabilities of tourism business managers and entrepreneurs and to encourage collaboration amongst firms and regions to increase margins and investment in the sector.

NZTE will work closely with the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism New Zealand, the Tourism Industry Association of New Zealand, Qualmark and other stakeholders over the next few months in refining and realigning existing NZTE programmes to enhance its effectiveness within the tourism sector.

To see what NZTE can offer your business go to www.nzte.govt.nz or for more general business information go to www.biz.org.nz.

Stop albatross slaughter, Prince pleads

PRINCE Charles' call to the world's fishing industry and governments to get on with the job of halting the preventable slaughter of albatross and petrel, should be heeded by the New Zealand government and fishing industry, according to the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

Conservation manager Kevin Hackwell says: "The prince has laid down a clear challenge to get on with the job of implementing the simple, inexpensive and very effective techniques which would save the lives of around 300,000 albatrosses and petrels that are killed worldwide every year in longline and trawl fisheries." He describes New Zealand as the albatross capital of the world with 14 of the world's 21 species breeding here and with many now under global threat of extinction." Mr Hackwell said. "Around 10,000 albatrosses and petrels are killed in New Zealand waters each year by our longline and trawler fleets. As the Prince of Wales has indicated, these deaths are avoidable."

Facelift for Lake Plaza

ROTORUA'S largest hotel, the 250-room Lake Plaza Rotorua Hotel, is undergoing a \$500,000 refurbishment. The property was built in 1967.

GM Harry Salisbury says quality fabrics and furnishings are complemented by two queen size beds giving the end product versatility from a marketing perspective be it tourism or corporate.

"This has provided us with a new benchmark for future work. A further 49 rooms will be refurbished in the winter months, providing the hotel with 100 rooms of the same superior standard. This will help us maintain our competitive edge in this ever increasing mid-range market," Mr Salisbury adds.

QF provides three a week to Queenstown QANTAS from July 2 will operate three services a week between Sydney and Queenstown while continuing its weekly direct Brisbane to Queenstown service.

Warning on future of airlines

INTERNATIONAL controls on airline ownership threaten to drive a number of Asia Pacific carriers into bankruptcy or government ownership within the next five years, warns Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation MD Peter Harbison. He says governments should move to relax regulatory structures and allow airline consolidation - or face the consequences.

“In this industry, there are far too many airlines operating today. However, the highly nationalistic attitude towards national flag carriers means that the prospect of cross border merger is near-impossible. So they can’t merge.”

He adds: “As we have seen recently in New Zealand, countries are highly reluctant to let their flag airlines disappear. So, as the economics of having too many producers makes itself felt, governments will watch in awe as their flag carriers decline into bankruptcy.”

Mr Harbison says that an airline outcome of this nature is difficult to identify and, as a result, governments are very slow to react - “meaning that things will have to get very bad before they get fixed.”

Treetop walkway being considered for Franz Josef

NGAI Tahu Tourism is still evaluating the possibility of a treetop walkway and tower at Franz Josef, confirms CEO Adrian Januszkiewicz.

“We are doing costings and modelling at present. We have not made a decision whether to press the button or not.”

He says informal feedback from DoC and others in the region is positive. But no formal concession approval has been applied for. “A lot depends on how many people we think will want to do the walk, although we do believe that part will be ok.”

If the canopy walk goes ahead it will start within 100m of the hotels and restaurants and will see visitors reach it probably by a short cableway.

“We are trying to leverage off the customers already in Franz Josef who are staying the night. They may like to take the walk after dinner or in the afternoon when they come off the glacier.”

Endeavour returns to Gisborne

THE replica of Cook’s Endeavour is on her way back to Australia. The only New Zealand port she’ll visit is Gisborne where she arrives on March 29.

ADVERT

DESTINATION MARLBOROUGH Tourism Marketing Executive

An exciting opportunity exists within Marlborough’s Regional Tourism Organisation for an intermediate/senior marketing person to assist in the marketing of the region to visitors within New Zealand and overseas.

The Tourism Marketing Executive reports to the CEO and is responsible for a range of activities including developing and implementing domestic and international marketing programmes including the conference sector and managing a Visiting Media Programme

A position description is available from:

Destination Marlborough
25 Alfred Street
Blenheim
Ph: 03 577 5523
Email: admin@destinationmarlborough.com
Web: www.destinationmarlborough.com

The junior Marketing Co-coordinator position advertised in January has been held over and will be readvertised once this position has been filled.

All applications should be in writing and accompanied by a CV.
Applications close 5pm Friday 1 April 2005

Dent says he has the answer...

CREDIT control. That's the answer to the likes of TAT Travel, which went into receivership in January, reportedly owing \$2.6 million (IT535).

SouthernStar Touring's Hugh Dent says: "After 15 years in the tourist transport sector I can say that by careful credit control my losses have been in the hundreds not thousands of dollars."

He adds: "I note with interest that the ITOC drum beat goes on. (CEO) Peter Lowry holds ITOC out as being the standard setter! ITOC and TAANZ withdrew membership last September, for TAT, IATA put them onto cash...if we were relying on any of those bodies as a benchmark of quality and assurance then we would have been totally misled. The horse had bolted well before September."

Mr Dent says he's not trying to be critical of ITOC, TAANZ or IATA. "I am sounding a warning that the members of these bodies are not automatically good credit risks, and that we as operators, be it hotel, transport etc must assess our own exposure to the client and manage our own businesses accordingly."

Mr Dent says he's never been a great supporter of state licencing. But given the level of opportunists that are in this industry we might do well to look at the Australian model for some guidance as to industry control.

All they want is a trans Tasman airline

INVERCARGILL needs only three percent of all Australians who come to New Zealand to fly into the city to pay for the airport runway. Venture Southland Tourism says that with the runway almost completed it is now a "robust and compelling proposition" to airlines - with strong market and operational drivers that will work in the region's favour.

"We are motivated to ensure that the region's investment in the project is recouped many times over, by seeing it through to fruition with the successful launch and sustained operation of scheduled international air services to the region."

Tourism and events manager Kate Watkinson says the project is an example of a regional initiative that all significant industry members, local bodies, publicly funded agencies and trusts have seen as being a cornerstone in the continuing development of the region.

"All of these organisations have lent their considerable support and encouragement and will no doubt continue to do so, as required, until the goal is achieved. It is this co-operation between Southland's key organisations - public and private - that will ensure Southland's positive future and firmly place us at the forefront of New Zealand's provincial regions," she adds.

Hate longhaul? With QF you can take it lying down!

JUST one sleep. That's how long it takes to fly here from the US. And making it easier still is Qantas, which from April 1 will be offering a lie-flat bed to business passengers.

Skybed - on the 747-400s - is the ultimate business class bed. Initially it will be available on QF25/26 services three days a week. From the end of June, six services a week will be in operation. Skybed installation will be completed by November 1 when daily services will offer this product.

Cable Car Museum popular with public

AS visitor numbers continue to climb at the Wellington Cable Car Museum, it's no surprise that 96 percent of visitors would recommend the experience to others. What is more, three out of four rated their experience "very good" or "good", while no-one was dissatisfied.

These are among the findings of the latest UMR Research survey conducted at the museum, now Wellington's busiest after Te Papa. Wellington Museums Trust CEO John Gilberthorpe says: "We already know we must be getting it right, as visitation levels have climbed steadily since the museum opened four years ago to more than 220,000 people annually. However, this survey shows us the high degree of satisfaction those visitors are actually experiencing."

About 74 percent of museum visitors are from overseas with a further 13 percent from the Wellington region and the rest from elsewhere in New Zealand. Of the Wellington visitors questioned, most were making a repeat visit and 69 percent gave the museum a "very good" rating.

Overall, 54 percent said the museum was "very good", 40 percent "good" and the rest "satisfactory", with no-one rating it "poor" or "very poor."

The results reinforce the decision to expand the museum building and to restore and display a further historic cable car. Construction starts next month and the project should be completed by October. "One of our aims is to improve access to the museum's lower level, where the original cable car winding system is on display...only half our visitors currently venture downstairs..."

Contact: 04-4710919 or JohnG@wmt.org.nz.

ADVERT

Visiting Stewart Island?

There's plenty of accommodation at Beach House and Kereru House. Bookings: Brenda and Roger Hicks on phone/fax 03-2191348

Only sour note is NZIS, says Hamilton

THE "Full Monty" - the full edition of *IT* - is really interesting even if it is time consuming, industry doyen Duncan Hamilton tells us.

"(TIANZ CEO) Fiona Luhrs is coming into her own in a sane, sensible and knowledgeable way.

"(TNZ CEO) George Hickton and the Minister in their quite different ways are positive and constructive but appear to be fully aware of the pitfalls that could - and usually do - occur if vigilance is not on everyone's mind. It really is refreshing.

"But it is a singularly impressive commitment to get on and make tourism the success it was always going to be. In the past we had problems not of our own making, like oil crises, that snuffed out the candle just as it was glowing brightly!"

Mr Hamilton says our main impediment - distance from markets - has miraculously turned into one of our greatest advantages.

"The only sour note was Paul Swain's Immigration Service (NZIS) on tour escorts. The record of the department over the last 50 years can only be described as disgraceful. Their behaviour is on a par with the Education Department."

Mr Hamilton has driven extensively through the North Island in recent weeks. And if the number of road works is anything to go by we can expect real improvement there, too!

Fastbreak now global service

BUDGET Rent a Car's frequent traveller programme Fastbreak has been upgraded to become a global service. Members now have the opportunity to obtain free global status. Customers receive Fastbreak service anywhere in the Budget world network. This includes more than 3,000 Budget locations worldwide where members will no longer have to complete rental agreements when they travel overseas.

"The Fastbreak programme is about making members' rental experience hassle free," says Budget marketing manager John Devaney. "We are pleased to increase customer satisfaction by strengthening the programme." Members also enjoy one-click bookings right from the Budget.co.nz home page. Details: 09-5262826 or john.devaney@cendant.co.nz.

Golden Oldies to be well looked after!

WELLINGTON is to host the World Golden Oldies Rugby Festival in 2006. And Positively Wellington Tourism CEO Tim Cossar says: "It will have far-reaching benefits for the city's tourism industry, both in terms of economic gain and international profile." The week-long event could pump up to \$15 million into the local economy. The players and their supporters will be here to play hard and party hard. They'll be spending on accommodation, dining out, shopping and seeing the city and wider region. And if they have a great time, they'll go home and tell their friends and family to visit Wellington."

Blossom Festival date

THE Alexandra Blossom Festival Grand Parade is on September 24 this year. Event manager Ingrid Temple says it is the iconic activity for the Alexandra Blossom Festival and the event that most visitors attend. Details: 021-375047 or ingrid@eventmanagement.co.nz

* For a full list of New Zealand events read the latest issue of *New Zealand Events Update*, sister publication to *IT*.

Park has \$1M turnover

THE Te Kaha Motels and Holiday Park is for sale as a freehold going concern. Michael Miles of Bayleys says a million dollar turnover is generated by the motel, holiday park, general store and off-licence, a Post Office and café. Contact: 027-2238875 or www.bayleysnelson.co.nz.

Challenging speaker

NEW Ways of Looking at Old Data: If We Look at Tourism Data in New Ways, Do We See New Things?

That's the theme of an industry seminar by Peter November from the School of Marketing and International Business at Victoria University, at Rutherford House, Wellington, on March 23. Organiser Adam Weaver says Mr November will demonstrate two experimental research computer programmes that produce unusual graphics from large quantities of longitudinal data.

"In particular, he will illustrate what the programmes can do with New Zealand tourism data. Peter invites people to come along and see if they can see new things in old data. He likes to challenge conventional wisdom."



Flat business class beds to and from Los Angeles available from April 2005

ADVERT

Manukau City Council gets serious about tourism

MANUKAU City Council has signalled its commitment to the industry with its decision to work in partnership with Tourism Auckland and local operators for the strategic development of tourism. It has also agreed to the establishment of a Tourism Advisory Forum.

The council has for a number of years sought to help its smaller operators by providing business advice and support through Enterprising Manukau.

Tourism spokeswoman Vickie Allan says: "The unprecedented growth in tourism worldwide and its corresponding economic benefits has exciting implications for Manukau.

"The Auckland International Airport - the single largest tourism business in the region - is located in Manukau. Yet, with all the benefits this offers, we have yet to maximise Manukau's full potential as a tourism destination."

Critical mass

She says that with the TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre to open next month the city is reaching a critical mass of tourism related product, sufficient to make it imperative that tourism businesses are well supported by professional, well organised marketing and promotional activities.

"The partnership with Tourism Auckland will provide the best opportunity for Manukau tourism operators to attract both domestic and international visitors to the city.

"The forum will complement this partnership by providing industry input into the development and delivery of tourism in Manukau. We have selected members from the tourism industry who can adopt a strategic vision and work closely with local operators to increase their business."

As part of the wider Auckland region Manukau needs

to differentiate itself from the other cities and identify its point of difference, which is as the region's cultural destination; ideally targeting the international interactive traveller.

Ms Allan says Manukau has a unique selling point in its cultural diversity with 165 different ethnicities; identified by TNZ as the main draw card for international visitors.

Priority

Priority must go to the city's unique projects such as the Gateway Heritage Trail incorporating the Otuaataua Stonefields and Mangere Mountain; and premier cultural events such as the ASB Cultural Festival.

"The interactive traveller likes to choose food, wine and community experiences such as the Clevedon A & P show. There is ample opportunity for this type of tourism product to be further developed and showcased."

She adds: "We need to attract customers to our area through the key scenic or cultural attractions, or premier events. However, other smaller attractions can be the most memorable, such as a craft shop in Whitford, a vineyard in Clevedon, or a superior dining experience at a city's café. But they need to know where to find them.

Information

"Tourism operators need to provide the necessary information to encourage travellers to our city, with as much detail to help them make decisions well in advance so they choose us above others.

"Through the work of the Tourism Advisory Forum and the closer association created by council's partnership with Tourism Auckland and local tour operators, we intend to position ourselves to capitalise on the immense opportunities to secure a greater market share in this valuable industry."

Govt's hidden agenda like days of Muldoon?

A Ministry of Economic Development briefing to new Energy Minister Trevor Mallard reveals that officials advised him that changes to the Resource Management Act could be used to undermine public opposition to major infrastructure changes.

"This is the hidden agenda behind the Resource Management Act changes currently before Parliament," says Forest and Bird conservation manager Kevin Hackwell.

The paper notes that Transpower's proposed electricity transmission lines across the North Island faced considerable opposition and suggested that the proposed changes to the Resource Management Act provided "a range of options that may assist," including the proposed new fast track call-in process.

Adds Mr Hackwell: "This paper is confirmation of government's plans to fast track its favoured big

projects under a new 'Think Big' programme. We haven't seen a government act like this since the dark days of the original Think Big programme under Robert Muldoon and Bill Birch."

Government is considering using the new call-in process to strip affected communities of their Environment Court appeal rights. "This may prove to be the perfect vehicle for the government to ram through favoured projects over the top of local community opposition," he adds. "Last year Forest and Bird uncovered a list of 39 major projects throughout New Zealand "that were the kind of projects officials considered possible candidates for the fast track call-in process."

Fewer visitors = increased revenue

I-SITE Blenheim had two percent fewer customers in January - but a 12 percent increase in revenue.

Picton I-SITE had the same with eight percent fewer visitors and a nine percent increase in turnover.

Contiki founder comes into the limelight - reluctantly

CONTIKI founder, Marlborough-based John Anderson has decided to come into the limelight - for the first time since he started a business that eventually introduced 1.6 million young people to the world.

Mr Anderson will be telling his story at The Great Gathering in Sydney from April 1-3. The event will be a huge reunion for those who either worked or travelled with Contiki between 1962 and 1989 when Mr Anderson sold the business.

He launched it at the age of 22 when, with just 25 pounds in his pocket, he started travelling with a 12-seat minibus and 11 strangers.

When he sold the business it had a turnover of \$150 million, operating in Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - and a fleet of 160 coaches. By then Contiki owned resorts, a 15th century French chateau, a Greek schooner, and leased villas, castles and cruisers around the world. It is said 250,000 New Zealanders and 800,000 Australian have taken a Contiki tour. The "18 to 35s" from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s now have children of their own who are travelling Contiki. Details: www.thegreatgathering.co.nz.

Operators not told about health dangers

SOME kayakers and whitewater rafters using Rotorua's Kaituna River are furious that they have not been told about health warnings concerning an outbreak of toxic algal bloom. They are demanding an urgent meeting with health officials to discuss the issue. Operators are upset that the officials didn't consult them before going public. Some only knew about the alleged danger when they read it in newspapers. Seven companies use the river and employ 70 staff.

Growing for gold at Larnach Castle

THE New Zealand Gardens Trust is holding a seminar "Going for Gold" on Garden Tourism at Larnach Castle, Dunedin, from May 6-8.

Speakers include Liz Waugh who did the plants for TNZ's award winning garden at the Chelsea Flower Show, Qualmark's Ron Russell, and gardening gurus Gordon Collier and Jack Hobbs. Topics will include hosting overseas visitors, marketing and creating product and services to an international standard. Contact: Liz Morrow at lizmorrow@actrix.co.nz.

Carter opens conservation park

AHURIRI Conservation Park is a new high country park with glaciated mountain peaks, beech forests, valley floor wetlands and easy public access to the landscapes of the braided river valley, the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society says.

Conservation Minister Chris Carter, opened the park this week. Forest and Bird congratulated the Minister, DoC, the Nature Heritage Fund and the former lessees for its creation.

"The park with its many opportunities for easy day walks, tramping, climbing, fishing, mountain-biking and photography is a magnificent place to enjoy the peace and grandeur of being in a mountain valley," says field officer Eugenie Sage.

Luxury boutique hotel's timely opening

HUNTLEY House is the newest luxury boutique hotel to open in Christchurch. It has 17 large guestrooms, including one and two bedroom suites. The property is managed by David French, who has 39 years' experience in the industry. Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing CEO Ian Bougen adds:

"In the year ending December, Christchurch doubled the national average of guest nights - a 10.6 percent rise compared to the national average of 4.6 percent. The market share has also increased by 0.7 percent which equates to an additional 225,000 guest nights. The opening of Huntley House is timely as we foresee us maintaining and indeed growing this market share over the coming years. The fact that it is a luxury hotel is advantageous as this type of accommodation is increasingly in demand."

Huntley House is a member of Select Hotels and Resorts International. Rates start at \$345 per couple per night including breakfast and pre-dinner drinks and canapes, GST extra. Details: 03-3488435 or reservations@huntleyhouse.co.nz.

Excellent in beef and lamb

KAWAHA Point Lodge, Rotorua, has been awarded the 2005 New Zealand Beef and Lamb Hallmark of Excellence. The award recognises the quality of beef and lamb as well as the preparation and presentation of the dishes.

Kawaha Point is a member of Select Hotels and Resorts and is five-star Qualmark rated. Rates start from \$800 per couple per night b and b.

Some 287 major or unusual events are listed in the latest issue of *New Zealand Events Update*, of which 94 are newly listed.

Can you afford NOT to know about them?

To subscribe costs only \$125 a year including GST for at least 11 issues. Details: nigel@insidetourism.com

ADVERT

On the move...

MINISRTY of Tourism policy manager Simon Douglas is leaving after more than seven years, to join the Ministry of Transport in a similar role.

Also leaving is executive officer Tangi Waikari who is joining Positively Wellington Tourism as a management assistant.

WARRIORS' foundation chairman Peter McLeod is now GM of Event Venues, Rotorua, replacing Nick Dallimore who left last year to take up a position in the private sector.

The position involves managing Rotorua's group of event facilities including the Convention Centre, Civic Theatre, International Stadium, Sportsdrome, Soundshell and Te Runanga Tea House. It also includes responsibility for driving the development and future operation of the new \$21 million Rotorua Energy Event Centre project, with construction due to commence. Community services director Charles Roberts says Mr Macleod successfully managed the \$18 million redevelopment of New Plymouth's Yarrow Stadium. He was also involved with developing Auckland's Ericsson Stadium.

Mr McLeod chaired the original board of the Auckland Warriors rugby league team which was New Zealand's first truly professional sports team. He has also been chairman of Auckland Rugby League.

FRANK Ash, one of the industry's self proclaimed "crusty old professionals", is now lecturing at the Sir George Seymour College of Travel and Tourism, Christchurch. He finds it ironic that although he was once a training advisor for the then Hotel and Catering Industry Training Board (HCITB) he couldn't initially get an interview for his latest job!

Mr Ash started his career as a catering officer/purser in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Then he tutored at Waikato Poly, became manager of Treasure Island, Fiji, GM Chatswood Manor Whakatane, GM, Christchurch Pavilions Motor Inn, manager of Braemar Lodge, Hanmer Springs, tutor at Tai Poutini Polytechnic, manager of Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki and then became marketing and economic development officer for Grey District Council.

He then bought the Qualmark four star rated restaurant The Breakers between Greymouth and Punakaiki.

JUDY Lourens is Carlton Hotel Auckland's new business development manager for conferences and incentives for the Australian market. She was previously sales manager for Hyatt Regency, Auckland.

AMANDA Fairbairn has been appointed sales and marketing assistant to NCC (NZ) Ltd, Christchurch, replacing Claudia Bieschke who has gone to Chicago.

Growth despite Asia decrease

A decrease in visitors to New Zealand from Asian countries could not stifle the increase in international visitors arriving here in January.

At two per cent, growth in arrivals was more subdued in January than in recent months, held back by a 12.6 percent decrease in Asian arrivals except Japan.

TNZ CEO George Hickton says that this can be attributed to a major Asian holidays falling in February instead of January.

"The public holiday period of Chinese New Year fell in February this year, but last year it was in January. This holiday is a major focus of travel, and many potential visitors will have moved their plans accordingly."

Fewer visitors stayed longer

ALTHOUGH slightly fewer visitors stayed overnight in Marlborough during December they stayed longer and thus provided more visitor nights. The month was a record, as was the whole of 2004.

The Commercial Accommodation Monitor (CAM) showed that 2.5 percent fewer visitors stayed overnight during the month compared to the previous December but these visitors spent two percent more nights in total. The surprise was that the domestic market was up nearly three percent, which went against the recent trend of New Zealanders holidaying overseas.

Another surprise was the slightly slower overseas market growth of just one percent. The RTO reports good growth out of North America - but Australia and the UK were softer.

"With figures now available for the full 2004 calendar year we can see dramatically how Marlborough's tourism industry has changed, with a dramatic surge in interest from overseas.

"In 2004 we experienced a record number of visitor nights spent in commercial accommodation - up 2.3 percent on 2003," the RTO adds.

"Prior to that we had two years with very slight declines, so it's encouraging to see that we're turning the corner and growth is returning."

This is being driven by higher spending international visitors - they increased almost 15 percent on whilst the "troublesome" domestic market slipped more than five percent with Kiwis being induced to holiday overseas in record numbers due to inexpensive airfares and a strong dollar.

Almost 44 percent of all nights spent in Marlborough last year were by overseas visitors - which is up from 39 percent the previous year and only 30 percent five years ago. The RTO says this is one of the biggest shifts in market share anywhere in the country!

Harvey still after Whenuapai

WAITAKERE Mayor Bob Harvey isn't giving up on plans for a commercial airport at Whenuapai. It could be another decade before the air force finally leaves. But Mr Harvey believes a joint operation could be operating much sooner - providing the New Zealand Defence Force agrees.

Telecom to introduce payphone charges for 0800 numbers

The reason why...

TELECOM is to introduce new payphone access charges at the end of April, confirms the company's public affairs and government relations manager John Goulter. But many tourism operators are furious... Asked to comment on complaints from operators Mr Goulter explains: "Telecom is to follow the international practice of applying a surcharge to providers of toll-free and calling card services when calls to these services are made from Telecom payphones. "More than two-thirds of all calls made on payphones are now calls to toll-free numbers or calls made using calling cards and they make little or no contribution to the cost of maintaining the payphone network. "The number of those calls made on payphones has been growing sharply in recent years, contributing to the situation where the payphone network's costs have run ahead of revenues for some time."

Network

Telecom's payphone network includes more than 5,000 payphones in cities, towns and communities throughout New Zealand. "We want to ensure that New Zealanders continue to have access to a widespread and well maintained national payphone network service from Cape Reinga to the Bluff both now and into the future. "We have looked at how other countries have addressed this issue and have decided that a surcharge to the providers of these toll-free and calling card services will be the best way to ensure that all providers are contributing fairly to the cost of operating and maintaining the payphone network. This will also bring the payphone charging into line with how such calls from mobiles have been treated for some time." Telecom plans to pass the costs on to the users of these services."

Similar

Mr Goulter adds: "Similar payphone access charges are in place in countries including the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, France, Germany, Norway, Canada and Singapore." Telecom has given affected 0800 call service providers plenty of notice to allow them to plan for the surcharge. It has a range of rates for businesses including plans for people who receive calls from around the country or mainly from mobile phones. Introducing the payphone access charge may mean that a current 0800 plan is not the best plan for a particular business and they may be better off changing their plan to match the new calling patterns. Mr Goulter adds: "If they receive a lot of calls from a payphone they might be better off switching to a regional plan, especially if they get a lot of calls from the same region or within the same island. This means that, in most cases, businesses shouldn't pay more than 45 cents per minute for providing an 0800 call service to their customers via payphones."

Operators are furious

A major South Island operator is furious that Telecom will next month introduce new payphone access charges which he says are an extra 21.33 cents/minute "because of diminished revenues with users using calling cards etc." The operator is reluctant to be named but says: "It's a ridiculous impost, which Telecom claims is in line with overseas practice - the relevance of which escapes me, and the veracity of which I doubt." He adds: "With Telecom facing competition in other areas, I see their attack on 0800 numbers as exploitation of the monopoly they continue to enjoy in that area." A straw poll of readers shows that 95 percent of those who replied are aghast that Telecom should even consider such charges.

Details

Doug Strong of Abel Tasman Wilson's Experiences says: "We use 0800 numbers but have no control from whence a caller might call. If Telecom don't want users to get a free call from a call box, then why did they promote this service? "Accordingly, if they are to proceed with this charge, we believe they should ask if we are prepared to receive the call. And if so, then detail each call on our invoice, with date and the location of the call box. "The alternative, is to make a charge at local rates to the call box user with ourselves paying the premium." **John Milburn** of Monarch Wildlife Cruises Ltd: "Telecom is making megaprofits. The government continually bleats on about helping small businesses which are apparently the 'backbone of the country' but continually brings in legislation, such as the Holidays Act, which makes you wonder why you bother and whether you would be better off packing shelves at the local supermarket. 0800 numbers are an integral part of many tourist operators communication/booking systems and additional costs such as this, plus fuel prices, Holidays Act costs, will force operators to increase prices at a time when economists are telling us that New Zealand tourism faces a potential slow down because of our unfavourable exchange rate."

Monopolistic

The move is just another example of monopolistic power to the detriment of the tourist industry, says Cassimir Lodge's **Reg Turner**. "It must be challenged and prevented!" Agreeing is Top 10 Holiday Parks GM **Kevin Gough**: "It is blatant monopolistic price gouging of commercial customers, who are already subsidising the residential network - Wake up the Ombudsman!" He says the group is "significantly" affected as toll free reservations access is mandatory for all Top 10 Holiday Parks - and it is probably an expectation of visitors nowadays. "There is no logic in expecting each phone booth nationwide to be a self supporting revenue centre - the

Telecom to introduce payphone charges for 0800 numbers

rationale of having a toll free line is that it can be used anywhere and the cost should be spread accordingly across the network.

“Can Telecom explain why from April 1 it will cost 65 cents a minute to call our office from a phone box down the road, but only 48 cents a minute to call our toll free line from anywhere in Australia, including a phone box in the outback!”

Rural Tourism Holdings' CEO **Peter Muir** says most 0800 calls received by his organisation are from mobiles or land lines so Telecom's new pricing strategy will not have a great affect on them.

Important

“I believe phone booths are important to the tourism industry and they need to be maintained to the highest standards so somebody should be paying. Who should be paying is another question.

“At the end of the day Telecom either recoups the maintenance costs by adding a surcharge to 0800 calls or puts the cost of tolls up across the board.”

Wayne Sheard, GM of Skotel Alpine Resort, Mount Ruapehu, like several other operators, has switched to other telcos. “We switched to TelstraClear for our line rental, toll calls and 0800 number due to better rates all round.

NZ Encounters' **Gina Ratcliffe** adds: “All I have to say is there goes the decision for us! We were debating about whether an 0800 number is a good service to offer our clients while in the country - now we won't!”

North Shore Visitor Information centre manager **Raewyn Bredeesen** says: “This is rather scary. I wonder if perhaps VIN or NZTIA could have any influence here because of the ramifications for tourism industry operators. It could cause havoc with our calling card sales, as well.”

Bar

“Yes we are affected by it,” says Rainbow's End Theme Park GM **Evan Wheeler**. “However, the number of calls received from call boxes would not appear to really be that many so we have put a bar on calls to 0800 from call boxes.”

It will make no difference to Destination Marlborough, reckons CEO **Paul Yeo**. “Do people still use phone boxes? They'll be in museums within 10 years.”

But it will make a difference to operators such as **Mark Ebery** of Blazing Paddles: “We currently pay about \$500 per month for calls from customers and if Telecom does what it says, it may well be the catalyst to make a change to another supplier.”

David Wilson of Heritage Futures is not effected - but he believes the move is counterproductive for the industry - and should be opposed.

One company which has taken steps over the last six months to improve communications for bookings and general queries is Bottom Bus of Dunedin. Owner **Ralph Davies** says: “This has also involved revamping our 0800 service to set it up to cost us less whilst still

delivering the same results. The proposed action by Telecom works right against these actions and my preference for using this service. If it goes ahead we will curtail our use of the 0800 service and promote bookings to land lines and by email and to our new online booking service.”

Simon Nikoloff of Kiwihost says that if Telecom does introduce the charges it will open up an opportunity for someone else to offer a public phone service using a third party provider like Zintell. “It sounds like to me a great opportunity for retailers and tourist outlets to offer a unique service!”

Another operator, who didn't wish to be named, agrees that affected operators should move business to Zintell. Oamaru i-SITE manager **Tania Pacey** says the move will affect visitors - and the centre's sale of phonecards. “(It's) just another money-making activity by Telecom. Doesn't it make enough money already? This is not a very friendly gesture by Telecom. It might be the case overseas but this doesn't necessarily make it right.”

No position

InterCity Group CEO **Malcolm Johns** says Telecom has yet to advise what the new charges may be. “As a result InterCity Group has yet to form a formal position on the proposal.

“Telecom operates a monopoly in regards to call boxes and thus without regulation its free to act as it pleases. Given the current governments actions to date in regards to telecommunications issues, I doubt regulation will be forthcoming.

“The business case presented to us by Telecom for increasing such charges has at this point not convinced us that the need is genuine.”

One reader in support of Telecom is **Chris Adams** of Jasons, who now lives in Colorado.

Disadvantage

He tells us: “I believe even a brief review of telecommunication trends around the world shows that telcos with traditional fixed line businesses - or other traditional infrastructure such as calling boxes - which have to be maintained and serviced - are at a significant disadvantage in cost structure and revenue growth potential to wireless operators such as Vodafone.

“With more locals and even visitors using cell phones - 55 percent of which are Vodafone - not Telecom - calling cards and phone boxes are bringing in less revenue - but costing essentially the same to maintain and service. It is not surprising it has introduced a surcharge.”

Mr Adams says he is not a slavish apologist for Telecom. “Where I think we should be very critical is on the issue of its opposition to number portability and (until recently) ADSL costs for high speed internet.”

And consultant **John Ainsworth** says the new rates are not targeted at tourism. “It's an across-the-board charge to all 0800 numbers...Last year Telecom made the statement that public place phone boxes may be taken out if the special/high costs cannot be recovered.”

Focus on Marlborough: future looking good!

BY 2010 total visitors to Marlborough are expected to increase by 16 percent to 1.2 million, an average annual growth rate of 2.1 percent. Total visitor nights will increase to 2.5 million, up 18 percent, and visitor expenditure 54 percent to \$320 million.

The latest Marlborough Tourism Monitor also shows the industry provides 2,037 jobs, or 13 percent of all employment. Some 769 are employed in food and beverage services, 530 in accommodation services and 59 in museums and other cultural services.

The region is described as a secondary domestic destination, drawing mainly holiday visitors from Canterbury, Wellington and Auckland. It attracts around 1.3 percent of total international nights. Visitor nights are dominated by holiday travellers, which made up 58 percent of total nights in 2003. But holiday nights in the region are projected to grow 17 percent to 1.4 million by 2010. VFR was 549,000 nights in 2003, making 26 percent of the region's total.

"The contributions from business, education and other travel are smaller in percentage terms, though still generate 352,000 visitor nights overall," it adds.

Motels

The monitor shows that most commercial visitor nights are spent in motel accommodation (40 percent), followed by caravan/camping grounds (27 percent). Backpacker, hotel and hosted accommodation handle the rest. Marlborough's share of total New Zealand visitor nights and expenditure is expected to decrease marginally by 2010 - mainly because of the large influence of the slower-growing domestic market.

By 2010, international visitors will account for 34.8 percent of total nights in the region, compared with 28 percent now and 38.4 percent of total expenditure, which is at present 33.8 percent.

"The region's outlook is for reasonably steady growth throughout the forecast period, and while international tourist nights will grow at a faster rate than domestic, there is only limited change anticipated by 2010 in average length of stay and the mix of day and overnight visitors."

By 2010, total overnight visits are expected to increase 20 percent to 757,000 and total day visits by 10 percent to 458,000. Total nights are expected to similarly increase to 2.5 million, or 17.6 percent, and visitor expenditure to \$320 million by 2010, or 54.4 percent.

Spend

The monitor notes that international visitors spend on average a shorter time in Marlborough - 2.8 nights - than domestic visitors - 3.6 nights - and this pattern is expected to persist to 2010.

Overall, average expenditure per visitor is expected to increase steadily, from \$284 in 2003 to \$371 by 2010 for overnight visitors. Average spend by day visitors is also expected to grow, to \$85 per day by 2010, from the current \$68.

Domestic spending rates are projected to grow faster than international, although Marlborough's overseas visitors still spend considerably more (\$307 per visitor, 2003) than domestic (\$167 per visitor, 2003).

Canterbury is Marlborough's largest domestic tourist market, due to its size and position. That region accounts for 34.1 percent of Marlborough visitor nights (521,000 nights in 2003, increasing to 556,000 nights in 2010).

Visitor nights from Wellington (19.6 percent, or 299,000 nights) are the next largest market for domestic tourism, with Marlborough's neighbour Nelson/Tasman region contributing 154,000 nights, or 10.1 percent of Marlborough's total nights.

Auckland and Otago, provide the other significant contributions with shares of nine percent and 6.8 percent respectively.

International visitors stayed 282,045 nights in commercial accommodation in Marlborough in 2003/4, up 12 percent on the previous year. This is 56.5 percent more than when figures were first collected in 1999/2000.

Opportunity in Hawke's Bay

THERE remains an opportunity for someone to provide a four star plus hotel in Hawke's Bay to complement existing accommodation capacity, says Hawke's Bay Tourism CEO Hamish Lowry.

"Both the tourism trade and conference organisers have been saying to us for some time that there is a gap..."

"Hotel management companies have been in regular contact in recent years, particularly as the profile of Hawke's Bay's world class food, wine and lifestyle has grown," he tells us.

Southland seminar

TNZ, TIANZ and Qualmark have a seminar for Southland operators in Invercargill on April 19.

Both correct!

NEW MANZ CEO Michael Baines has corrected us about the number of members his association has. He says we were wrong last week to say it was 850 - it's 1,020.

But we were delighted to point out we were correct, too!

The figure was in our *Pages Past* column and we were quoting the MANZ membership of 10 years ago - not 2005.

"We are very proud to have passed the 1,000 member mark. It represents the tremendous work that has gone into providing benefits to members, representing their interests and providing an association of interest that works for and with the membership," he adds.

Kaiteriteri carers

NEWLY appointed to the Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve Board are: Peter King, Tony Fry, Bill Thomas and DoC Nelson/Marlborough conservator Neil Clifton, who have been reappointed, and new members Brian Gibb, Marama Takao, Ropata Taylor, Rosemary Jones and Tim King, who represents Tasman District Council. They have been appointed for a five-year term.

Burrow appeals for Peace Bell sponsorship

GORDON Burrow of Nomads New Zealand is appealing to the industry to help support the World Peace Bell, to be unveiled in Christchurch.

It is a copy of the one in the inner court of the UN headquarters in New York, given by Japan after WW2.

Mr Burrow says there are 19 identical World Peace Bells in 15 countries. Coins to manufacture the bells have been now donated by 103 UN member countries, including New Zealand.

“New Zealand has now been donated a bell, which has arrived in Christchurch and has been placed in storage until such time as the construction of the pavilion to house the bell is completed,” he tells *IT*. “A target of September 2005 for completion and unveiling has been set. “It is envisaged that these costs will be around \$70,000 and the NZ Peace Bell Association is looking for support by donations and sponsorship to raise this money.” The idea of the bell is to enhance world peace by strengthening positive relationships between people of different cultures; to encourage young people of differing cultures to visit New Zealand to participate in outdoor adventure activities which they can, in turn, encourage in their own countries; to progress world environmental sustainability through exchange programmes aimed at preserving the earth’s ecosystem; to promote world peace through strengthening trade and tourism. Contact: 03-3327952 or gordon@nomadsworld.com.

Christchurch took AIME - and won new business

AIME 2005 produced excellent results for the Christchurch Convention Centre, with marketing staff quoting on new and significant business for 2006 - 2009, with much of it coming from PCOs and associations.

Australia sales executive Jo Robinson says the increased representation from several new countries added interest to the destination selection process but people are still looking for somewhere different, exciting and that suits the corporate environment.

Meetings are still primarily about getting to know peers, products, industry and business development - and that doesn’t always mean a sandy place to stay. Christchurch is well known for being a safe, contemporary city offering great value for money and is gaining market share as an incentive destination, she adds.

Jasons move into Christchurch

JASONS Travel Media Ltd has bought Christchurch-based Brochure Distribution Services. It completes the national coverage offered through the company’s comprehensive brochure distribution service.

Jasons Travel Media through its own offices and franchise network provides the largest brochure distribution in New Zealand with 1,700 outlets.

“Increased direct flights and the advent of new carriers, such as Emirates and Pacific Blue, take Christchurch up another level as a major gateway into New Zealand,” says Jasons Distribution Services, Jasons Travel Media manager Clive Jimmieson.

“Comprehensive brochure distribution makes certain that information is readily accessible and has greater reach and exposure than tourism accommodation and activities operators could manage on their own.”

He adds: “Inbound tourism is growing quickly in the Canterbury region and is a vibrant part of the regional economy. Jasons Travel Media is pleased to make this investment in the region. As the service expands to cover more of the region this will provide tourism companies with more opportunities for exposure and to get their information in front of travellers. It will also encourage more travellers to explore Canterbury and take up the great variety of tourism activities and accommodation here,” adds Mr Jimmieson. Brochure Distribution Services has been owned and managed by Trish Lovell for the last eight years.

Marine reserve for Nelson

A new marine reserve has been set up near Nelson.

It stretches for 5km from Glenduan, on Boulder Bank, to Ataata Point, at the south-western entrance to Cable Bay, and extends out one nautical mile from the shore. The reserve covers 948 hectares.

“Glenduan marine reserve is a significant addition to New Zealand’s network of protected marine environments.

“It will enhance the Nelson region’s superb coastal environment and its reputation as a centre of excellence for marine studies,” says Conservation Minister Chris Carter. He congratulated the Forest and Bird Protection Society for identifying the values of the area and nominating it for marine reserve status.

The reserve is the fourth created by the government since 2002, and the 20th in New Zealand waters.

WTO book shows how to manage congestion

A new WTO guidebook - Tourism Congestion Management at Natural and Cultural Sites - is aimed at a variety of professional users, including public authorities in the tourism, culture and nature fields. It provides recommendations to the different stakeholders in the industry on how they might contribute to the minimisation of tourism congestion.

WTO says destination and site managers will find a range of recommendations to build a well-informed understanding of their places and their visitors, as well as recommendations for upgrading the operational and physical capacities of their areas.

The guidebook is intended to provide very practical recommendations, using illustrations from the case studies. Congestion management practices are explained at different levels, linking actions between demand, destination and site management. The book costs EU65. Contact: www.world-tourism.org/

New holiday parks group setting up

FAMILY Parks of Australia along with 16 top New Zealand parks have released their first directory of their parks this side the Tasman.

Joint group president Mark Lindsay says: "We recognise that a New Zealand group linking New Zealand and Australia is very important for our association to grow. We expect to have 50 quality holiday/tourist parks in New Zealand by the end of 2005."

The selected criteria will be by position, quality, friendliness and cleanness. "Our VIP club membership - that all tourist and holidaymakers can join at any of our existing parks - allows members to obtain a 10 percent discount off our parks' tariffs. Contact: 07-3154741 or www.ohiwaholidays.co.nz.

Taupo in pictures

IMAGES of A Nation: Taupo is a new book which contains 150 photographs of, well, - Taupo. Industry cost is \$24.95. Contact: 06-7575093.

Airline profiting from surcharge?

AIRNZ makes millions from fuel surcharges, according to the *Sunday Star-Times*. The paper says the airline's accounts for the six months to December show jet fuel cost \$283 million - \$27 million more than the previous half year. But the surcharge drew in at least \$46 million and possibly \$93 million.

Travellers pay \$15 fuel charge on domestic flights, \$30 on trans Tasman flights and \$40 on longhaul trips.

Soccer star here for us

AN Argentinian soccer star is in New Zealand this week as part of TNZ's IMP programme. Sergio Goycochea played in two soccer World Cups in Maradona's heyday, is in the FIFA hall of fame and is considered a hero in Argentina.

He is now the front-person for the most popular TV travel show in Spanish-speaking Latin America – *Resto del Mundo*. – which is viewed by 4 million people in five countries in Latin America. TNZ has brought him and his crew down to New Zealand to film a feature on New Zealand which will run on the network later this year.

International students worth millions

INTERNATIONAL students were worth \$46.5 million to the Manukau economy in 2004. Enterprising Manukau tourism development manager Catherine Croot says: "There are many international education providers in the Manukau area and subsequently many students choose to live here. However, when it comes to leisure activities many students choose to play outside of Manukau. There are significant opportunities here for Manukau businesses to provide services for the many international students studying and living in the area."

The site to see

LUXURY Travel Magazine this week launched LuxuryTravelMagazine.com, described as "the definitive listing of 6,000+ of the world's ultimate travel experiences."

The site was created by former Beverly Hills "travel agent to the stars" Christine Gray. She says: "The site's comprehensive database includes distinctive experiences that can't be found on existing travel megasites, such as luxury lodges of New Zealand, castles in Scotland, villas in Mexico and wilderness retreats in Canada, among endless other possibilities."

Ms Gray says that until now luxury travel on the Internet has remained very scattered and fragmented. "We bring all the world's best travel options into one complete resource with innovative search capabilities that compare to consulting with your own trusted travel advisor."

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Tourism & Lifestyle Opportunities

AUCKLAND - 216 room hotel on 1.719 hectares. Presently operates as mid range hotel. Ideal opportunity to either upgrade hotel, develop as retirement village, apartments or combination of the two. Tom Crawford 027 278 9199 Carolyn Crawford 027 247 8716

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ROTORUA - Uniquely themed central city backpackers with owners/managers accommodation. 76 beds and showing consistent turnover with 90% occupancy. Buy business and or land and buildings. www.bayleys.co.nz # 283487. John Perrett 027 6565464

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