

US trend expert heads Tourism Futures Conference

An international expert in travel distribution strategy, technology and innovation will head the line-up of the 2008 Tourism Futures Conference on the Gold Coast June 2 to 4.

PhoCusWright CEO and President Philip Wolf is a recognised industry authority on strategic change and market trends. Mr Wolf founded PhoCusWright in 1994; the organisation has a formidable international reputation, being at the forefront of consumer trends, research and industry innovation for the tourism industry. The giant leaps being made in technology are rapidly changing the landscape for the tourism industry and PhoCusWright is the most respected authority in the industry coming out of the United States.

"It's no trade secret that consumers are embracing new technology," he said. "With the Travel 2.0 floodgates open and a Long Tail economy in full gear, a plethora of searching and shopping tools are empowering travel buyers in uncanny ways. It is easier than ever for travellers to plan the perfect trip – or rather, the perfect *trips*. It is more important than ever to adjust your strategy around good technology and intelligence."

Philip wolf will explain why the current marketplace is pregnant with potential. New ideas, new rules and new entrants are busy challenging the status quo. Globally the tourism industry is very dynamic at present so Australia has some stiff competition for international visitors as well as with the domestic market. The 2008 Tourism Futures Conference is a joint initiative of Tourism Australia, Tourism Queensland and the Gold Coast Tourism.

Originally founded by Tourism Queensland, it is now recognised as the premier industry forum in Australia. It brings together the cream of the tourism industry to assess the issues that are critical to survival and success in the current economic climate.

This year's theme, 'Global Market, Competitive Edge' will examine a wide range of issues including investment and development, consumer behaviour trends, destination marketing, climate change and trends in the aviation industry.

Conference Convenor Tony Charters said the flexible program allowed for discussion and debate about issues raised by the speakers. "The format will give delegates the opportunity to build their own conference program, with over 15 specialised workshops and great opportunities for networking with senior industry members, government policy-makers and key partner organisations and sectors," he said. "The middle day of the conference, *Tourism Futures TopLine*, will bring together an outstanding line-up of global and national expert commentators."

"This conference is an essential investment for business and government decision makers."

The conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Royal Pines Golf Resort & Spa on the Gold Coast.

For a full program and registration go to www.tourismfutures.com.au

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