

Sowing seeds of growth

Agricultural inbound specialist company Agri-Travel New Zealand has been acquired by New Zealand conference and event specialist ForumPoint2 Limited.

Both companies have operated for more than 20 years and combined they will provide extensive knowledge and experience to cover all bases for organisations requiring conferencing, including pre and post tours and partner programmes.

ForumPoint2 managing director Sally Bary says the move allows the company to offer customers a much broader range of services.

Judy (Court) Calder remains in the role of group tours director, while Karen Baldwin has been

recruited as group tours manager.

The purchase follows close collaboration between the two companies, successfully bringing large agricultural conference groups to New Zealand over the past five years.

Agri-Travel New Zealand specialises in agricultural and horticultural tours and is a member of Agricultural Tour Operators International (ATOI), Qualmark and NZ Tourism Export Council.



Judy Calder



Karen Baldwin

'China ready'? Time to act

New Zealand's tourism industry has spent long enough talking about emerging markets such as China, and now needs to be executing the opportunities, according to ANZ chief economist Cameron Bagrie.

'The broad tenants of the opportunities with Asian tourists are understood,' Bagrie told delegates at the Asia Summit in April. 'There's been talk about the opportunities for four or five years now, the story is pretty well sung. Now the debate needs to shift to execution.'

Bagrie says it is important to unlock a more consumer centric society.

'We know that China has too much money – if we had that problem in New Zealand we'd fix it in a fortnight,' he quipped.

'Free trade agreements are facilitating growth, that's certainly the route New Zealand is going down.'

Bagrie says on the tourism playing field, New Zealand suits the 'boutique market'.

'We need to ask whether we are going to be a volume player, or a boutique player, and I think New Zealand needs to get into a couple of key markets and do it well.'

Trevor Lee, director of TravConsult, specialises in training businesses in better understanding the tourism markets of China, India, Japan, Korea and other regions in South East Asia.

He believes successful adaptation to reach these markets needs to come from tourism operators locally, and not sourcing Asian staff to bridge the culture gap.

'The tourism industry is making a massive risk by hiring Chinese people to the job you're supposed to be doing,' he told the Asia Summit delegates.

'Don't hire someone from Hong Kong like every other country seems to be doing. Develop the staff – give them the necessary cultural background on the Chinese guest or visitor, then they'll get it, and the barrier will be broken.'

Lee also warns that New Zealand tourism businesses need to genuinely like the Chinese customers they deal with.

'They are very savvy about whether or not you're just after their dollar.'



Europcar has become the first vehicle rental company in New Zealand to add a fleet of BMW 3 Series to its model portfolio.

Europcar New Zealand general manager, Steve Whyte, says the company is committed to offering new vehicles with high ratings in both environmental sustainability and safety. 'The new BMW 3 Series is an exciting addition to the Europcar fleet and will be available for rental in the North Island and South Island.'

WIN WITH MAUI JIM

Maui Jim has offered TRAVELinc magazine a number of spectacular sunglasses to give away. One pair will be given to a lucky reader of this issue. To be in with a chance to win, just send an email to competitions@promag.co.nz with **Maui Jim** in the subject line. You will also need to answer the following question:

What destination is featured on the front cover of this issue of TRAVELinc?



The World's Most Memorable Gift Experience™