



New CEOs

- Shinichiro Ito, at **All Nippon Airlines**. A longterm ANA man, he is due to take over this April from Mineo Yamamoto, who becomes vice-chairman of the group, and who presumably soon will become chairman, in Japan's time-honoured tradition. The travel business in Japan, as much of the rest of the economy, is finding it hard to change traditions - even when there is evidence that tradition is not bringing results.
- Peter Malanik and Andreas Bierwirth, at **Austrian Airlines**. Both COOs, they take over from Alfred Otsch, who resigned after budget cuts. But AA is now part of the Lufthansa Group, so more changes seem likely.
- Barney Harford, at **Orbitz Worldwide**. Taking over from Steve Barnhart, he was with rival Expedia. His first job is to cut annual costs by US\$40-45mn.
- Gregory Duffell, at Bangkok-based **PATA** (Pacific Asia Travel Association). He joins from Bangkok-based Indochina Services Travel Group, a ground operator, where he has been CEO since 2006. An Australian, he has also worked for Thomas Cook (PATA credits him with "developing and implementing internet e-commerce solutions" in 120 countries, but ebusiness is actually a weakness for TC), and Budget Rent A Car (now owned by Avis).
- Alihashim Pengiran Haji Yusof, at **Royal Brunei Airlines**. He is deputy permanent secretary at Brunei's ministry of foreign affairs and trade, and now also CEO at the airline from this month, but temporary. He takes over from Ray Sayer, who was there less than 18 months. At the time, we said Sayer's job would be primarily operational as RBA is not run on commercial terms.
- Aw Kah Peng, at **Singapore**

Tourism Board. As normal for the STB, Aw is from a long and varied career in Singapore government departments. Perhaps the closest to a qualification for the STB job would be when she was regional director Europe promoting investment in Singapore 1998-2000. She joins at a hard time, with Singapore arrivals falling faster than in other regional destinations.

Higher education

He is no longer Mr Geoffrey Lipman, but Professor Lipman. By custom, the recipient of an honorary degree - this one was awarded by the Griffith University in Queensland - does not use the title in this way. But Lipman is, well, Lipman.

He founded and headed WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council), now widely accepted as the top-level link between the travel business and governments. He could even be credited with creating the (admittedly superfluous) multiple-noun 'travel and tourism'. We suspect T&T because he could hardly call his WTTC merely WTC - too close to rival WTO.

After leaving WTTC, Lipman busied himself with other activities and associations, but did not achieve the success he had with WTTC. He then moved into (you could say "moved onto") the World Tourism Organization.

He has never been a success in business; only with associations.

He is now assistant director at the WTO, and has built this (new; his creation) position into an important one. In many ways, he has been the leader, leaving WTO's head Francesco Frangialli to be what he was best at - administration.

But with headmaster-Frangialli going, formally, end of last month, could the professor get expelled? Or will he try to stay on as deputy headmaster, or even try to become headmaster?

(In one sense he must hurry. He is a UK national, and the WTO has an archaic rule that its staff must be nationals of a WTO member. Visit Britain is a member but - to WTO's embarrassment - is resigning only two years after rejoining.)

Discuss.

Briefs

- Peter Rothwell, new CEO of Kuoni, may be regretting his long 7-month wait before he took up his position (due to previous contractual obligations). The travel business has now turned sour.

Rothwell talks of Kuoni's belief "in the future [...and in] the future of travel". *Wow, is the outlook that bad?*

He is expected to announce a net profit for 2008 of US\$4.2mn (Sf4.9mn), up 3.3%, or 4.4% like-for-like. That seems fair, even good, although profits came in the first part of 2008. The outlook for 2009 for Kuoni looks unremittingly bad.

(Some information from Travel Inside, comment by People-in-Travel.)

- Whingeing poms.

Christopher Rodrigues, chairman of Visit Britain, the visitor-promotion-office, says the UK is "expensive, and the people are as cold as its weather". He says research shows the visitor business does not have "service with a smile" and courtesy "found in the Mediterranean, the US and the Far East".

An earlier UK tourism minister said its hotels were expensive, of poor quality, with "reused soaps, threadbare towels and poor amenities".

Australians would call these 'whingeing poms'. We believe the UK has great attractions and generally good (ie low) prices, particularly for airlines albeit excluding - and here we agree with the two whingeers - hotel prices.