

First Anza Workshop in Australia

The inaugural Australia New Zealand Agent (Anza) Workshop was held in Sydney, Australia in May and was billed as the “largest and most international student recruitment workshop of its kind in Oceania” by organisers, Icef and Ed Media.

Supported by English Australia and English New Zealand, the workshop attracted 227 agent delegates representing 162 agencies from around the world. Almost half hailed from Asia, while many European agencies made the trip down under, with 21 per cent of agencies representing this region. Fifteen per cent came from Oceania and 10 per cent from South America.

“The organisation of the workshop was first rate and the value gained by those attending was about as good as it gets,” commented Rob McKay, Chairperson of English New Zealand. Neda Morris from The Education Group, a group of English language schools and colleges in Sydney and Dubai, added, “I have made some good contacts, it’s certainly been very busy.”

Many educators were attending a workshop for the first time – 55 per cent of the 113 institutions, according to organisers, with a significant proportion of educators representing the high school

sector. Gaylene Sanford from Kamo High School in New Zealand said, “For some agents, New Zealand high schools is a totally new market and this is new for us too.”

The workshop included a harbour cruise (see page 12) and an evening dinner/dance at Dockside Darling Harbour. Next year, the workshop will be held in Auckland and Rod Hearps of Ed Media said the event would then return to Sydney, unless there is a consensus that another city would be preferred among educators. ●



The workshop in full swing (left); a group of Australian delegates (right)

MEI-Relsa scores with agent delegates

USUALLY I participate quite actively at workshops, fairs and fam trips but this one surprised even me with how busy and useful it was,” said Agnes Gönczi of Quaestor in Hungary – referring to the recent MEI-Relsa workshop and fam trips organised in April in Ireland.

Attracting 91 agencies and with 52 MEI-Relsa members attending, the event offered jam-packed fam trips taking in up to 50 schools that were held prior to the two-day workshop in Galway. “At the beginning I found it strange but I now think this was an excellent idea by the organisers [to stage fam trips first],” commented Gönczi.

“It helped me get to know the schools better before sitting down with them.”

Irish schools were also happy with the event, according to feedback. Rory Curley, Marketing Manager at ISI Ireland in Dublin, said, “What was really impressive about the conference was the wide variety of agents from all over the world – the amount of regions covered offered a truly unique opportunity to raise the profile of both our school and Ireland as a whole.”

The gala dinner featured Irish dancing along with stilt walkers and drummers. Jonath-an Duignan, Principal of Kaplan

Aspect in Dublin, said, “Galway pulled out all the stops with the Lord Mayor in attendance. The highlight of the event was the participation of several schools from Northern Ireland for the first time, a most welcome development which drew the biggest applause of the night.” ●



Stilt walkers wowed delegates

Agency of the month



In a series appearing each month in *Language Travel Magazine*, we ask a different language teaching institution to nominate one of their preferred agencies or agent partners, and to explain why this person/company is worthy of their nomination.

This month, **Taupo Language & Outdoor Education Centre** in New Zealand nominates **Academy of English** in Tahiti.



Mary-Rose Blackley, Director of the school, explains this decision:

“I would like to nominate Mary Johnson from the Academy of English in Papeette, Tahiti. She has an English school as well, but also arranges group tours to New Zealand, twice a year, when she escorts the student

group over here. I have worked with Mary for about 10 years, she knows the NZ Code of Practice, NZQA [qualifications authority] and NZIS [immigration service] compliancy well, and has always provided us with very accurate material regarding each student.

Above all I know I can trust her, if I report a student action, I know Mary will stand beside me, listen to both points of view, call the student, call the parents and not automatically take sides with the parent. I know I can call her in the middle of the night with an urgent issue relating to one of her students, or email her, and she will respond immediately. I am pleased to nominate her as Agency of the month.”

Industry issues - agents speak out

January February March April May June July August September October November December

Q. How are client demands evolving?



Kemal Yildiz, Pasifik International Education Consultancy, Turkey/Canada

"Most clients look for a city in which they can easily find a job, to socialise and to practise the language. Some also would like to study in schools that offer free elective courses that are taught by Tesol, TEFL or ELT students. Lastly, I see that schools with links or agreements with universities attract more attention in the market. According to my statistics, I can say that clients consider so many factors when they decide which country and city to go to and which school to study in. I believe that education counselors' advice is the main factor impacting on clients' evolving decisions."



Mike Daly, President, Universal Placement Program, USA

"They expect good customer

service – many international students apply (via my agency) to at least three schools [high school, university or college] at the same time hoping to get multiple acceptance offers they can choose from. These students are savvy consumers and will often choose to enroll at the school that they had the best experience with during the admissions process. If schools are really serious about attracting more international students and getting the maximum return on their recruiting efforts, they will need to make each applicant feel like a VIP. There are several creative ways that schools can go about doing this, but nothing beats quick, personalised responses to questions and fast admissions decisions. From our experience we find that most students will choose to attend schools that provide the quickest admissions decisions and make genuine efforts to make them feel important and welcomed at their school."



Wojtek Lapacz, Travel Solutions Poland, Poland

"Poland as a relatively young market is adapting to world trends very quickly. A few years ago, general English courses were mostly booked by our students, which is changing now. What we can observe very clearly here is a growing demand for more "specialised" packages – a "pure" course is very often not enough for our clients. Language and sports packages for young learners are requested much more often in 2008 than even two-to-three years ago. I think that English courses joined with football coaching (with clubs like Manchester United, Real Madrid, AC Milan or Arsenal) will be hits in Poland in the coming years. Older students search for alternatives to London, Dublin and other big cities – they are looking for schools with a rich social programme or specialised profiles much more often than before. In my opinion, tailor-made options for these clients who search for

language training and specialised options after classes will be the bestsellers in the near future."



Carlos Dallapiccola, WesBrasil, Brazil

"The English language itself used to be the main interest of our clients [who are] young adults and older. Now programmes that combine English with professional areas such as international marketing, IT, Tesol, hospitality, business have become increasingly sought after. Work experience programmes have also been drawing the attention of clients. Both young and experienced professionals have created awareness that global competence is highly desirable and needed in the marketplace. Learning a new language at a young age has become essential and this will [be] a new market for courses abroad. Parents are starting to consider the idea of sending their little ones from age 10 on for short-term language programmes (four, five, six, eight weeks)."



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Q&A

Fedele is the voice of the Spanish language teaching industry, working collaboratively with associated bodies. ASTRID VERLOT answers our questions.



Fact box

Full name: Federación Española de Asociaciones de Escuelas de Español para Extranjeros
Year established: 1999
Number of members: six associations with a total of 75 schools
Type of members: private schools specialised in teaching Spanish to foreigners
Association's main role: to represent the Spanish teaching sector to the Spanish government and defend the commercial and professional interests of member schools
Membership criteria: quality standard (Instituto Cervantes or CEELE)
Government recognition: yes
Code of practice: yes
Complaints procedure: Fedele Quality Charter and Code of Guarantees for Fedele students
Agent workshops/fam trips: yes
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What has been happening among Fedele members?

Our Federation is constantly growing and since last year we have had about 10 new incorporations of schools from Andalusia, the Basque Country, Madrid, Castila y León, and especially the region of Valencia.

How did the workshop go last year?

Forty-seven schools attended from all over Spain, many of them with two teams, offering the greatest range and the best quality of language courses in Spain, a country where the culture and way of life is unique in the world. They met with 67 agents from many different countries.

As an association, what are your main objectives in terms of working on behalf of members?

To represent the Spanish teaching sector to the Spanish government; defend the commercial and professional interests of member schools.

How does Fedele work with government bodies?

[We have] an annual promotion plan with Turespaña (the Spanish National Tourist Board) and the Instituto Cervantes (responsible for publication and distribution of the catalogue, international advertising campaign, annual agents' workshop) which helps to promote our sector. We also have noticed a considerable increase of the number of inscriptions for the Dele exams. The Dele diploma, recognised worldwide by many universities, institutions and companies, is issued by the Instituto Cervantes on behalf of the Spanish Ministry of Education, and certifies officially the level of knowledge of the Spanish language.

Are there any new markets opening up for the Spanish language teaching market in your opinion?

Growing markets are Italy, France and Eastern Europe.

On the move

Rebecca Willis has joined Eastbourne School of English on the UK's sunny south coast. Ms Willis spent several years as Marketing Executive for Ial before taking up the position of Marketing Executive. Graham White, the school's Principal, said: "We are delighted that Rebecca has joined us and hope she will help us raise the profile of the school all over the world."



St Giles International is pleased to appoint Robin Garforth to the post of Group Marketing Manager. Mr Garforth brings with him several years of ELT and sales management experience. "I'm delighted to be joining St Giles, and contributing to the continued success and growth of the group," he said.



Pippa Nash has become the new Sales & Marketing Manager at Shane Global in the UK. Ms Nash previously worked for an NGO in Lima, Peru, that specialised in providing education for children in slum areas. She gained her Celta in 1999 and has worked as an EFL teacher in Peru, Brazil, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina.



Purley Language College in the UK is pleased to announce the appointment of Andy Cowley as its new Director of Studies for English. Mr Cowley has over 15 years experience and previously worked with Languages Plus (Sprachcaffe) as a teacher, Director of Studies and Principal. He replaces Jennifer Allen who is retiring after 11 years as teacher, Director of Studies and owner.



Ability Education is proud to announce that Tim Eckenfels recently joined this Sydney English language college as Chief Executive. Mr Eckenfels brings to Ability Education over 15 years' depth of experience in international education. His previous appointment was as Study Group's Regional Director for Australia and New Zealand.



Chamber College in Malta has appointed a new Marketing Executive. Mr Antonello Cordisco, a graduate from Abruzzo's prestigious Teramo Studies University in Italy, joined the marketing team at Chamber College focusing on the Italian and Spanish markets. He has a wealth of knowledge in language travel particularly when it comes to student's extra curricular needs and customer care.



Services summary

New lower level online English test from UK

A new online English test for lower-level English speakers is being developed in a joint venture between the University of the Arts in London, UK, and English Language Testing, a UK company run by Caroline Browne, former UK Regional Director of Into University Partnerships.

The test, called Password, offers language schools and international departments at universities a quick and efficient way to assess the language abilities of students wanting to study on foundation, academic preparation or other pre-sessional courses. Browne said that Password was not a rival to Ielts or Toefl and instead was being developed for students with a lower level of English who would not be able to be accurately assessed under the Ielts or Toefl exam system.

"Password will replace the need for the traditional paper tests which have been used for 20 years and students can buy the answers too on any street corner," she said. "One of the most important things for us will be ensuring the security of test centres. We have employed someone full-time to look into this and [will have] legal contracts with test centres."

The one-hour multiple choice test will assess students' abilities in grammar and vocabulary and will offer an instant result for admissions officers. Universities and schools will be able to buy a number of the tests in a one-year subscription fee and can use them to assess applicants in the UK and overseas. Alternatively, students will be able to take the test in a number of secure test centres in their own country and use the result to decide which level of course they need to apply for. Browne said that she was on track to have 20 institutions and 20 test centres using the test by July and 50 testing centres by October. Password will be fully operational by next year.

At a launch held in London, UK, Connie Jackson at the University of Greenwich commented, "This would be good for institutions offering programmes for lower-level English speakers, such as 12-month foundation programmes."

And Jonathan Rees from the University of Birmingham said his institution would potentially use this test "as part of a number of tests to assess a potential student's ability." He added, "There aren't many online tests available. [Password] is quite a basic test but delivered in an up-to-date way."

New student housing at ANU in Australia

The Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, ACT, is in the process of building a second student accommodation complex that will house 500 students. The first phase of the development was completed in February last year and this phase is due to be completed by year end.

Vice-Chancellor of ANU, Ian Chubb, said, "Living on or close to campus means that students can take advantage of all that ANU has to offer and to make the most of their time here. It adds to the broad mix of accommodation options and accommodation support we provide."

Managed by UniLodge, a private student accommodation provider, the student housing complex forms part of the university's AUS\$600 million (US\$565) development plans to create a student precinct that will link the campus to the city. The venture involves seven large-scale projects including a computer centre, arts and community venues and office space.

The accommodation will consist of single occupancy studios, as well as five-bedroom flats. All apartments will have their own kitchen and bathroom as well as Internet access, television and phone connections.

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Grapevine



Irish schools' association, MEI-Relsa, held its workshop in Galway this year and featured stilt walkers (see page 8) and traditional music and dance performances. Pictured left, the association's Director, Adrian Cummins, with Alphe Workshop's Stephanie Helliwell. And pictured right, again with Stephanie, it's Monica Ugalde from Cultura y Turismo Accomadrid in Spain, who won a bottle of champagne in our LTM Spot the Difference competition!



High spirits, lederhosen and beer were some of the memories that Ialc Workshop delegates took away with them. Clockwise from top left:

Agents Katharina Winkler from Germany and Alyson Moore from Australia; new Ialc President, Walter Denz, with some impressed Ialc members; Organiser, Florian Meierhofer of BWS Germanlingua, lets off some steam on the dancefloor; an international hug; and three Brazilian agents sample a German-sized serving of beer.



The inaugural Anza Workshop in Australia eased delegates into the Australian lifestyle by taking them on a tour of the harbour, where dolphins made a surprise guest appearance. Above: Natives, David Scott of the English Language Company in Sydney (left) and John Paxton of Perth International College of English in Perth.



Travel Update Travel Update Travel Update Travel Update Travel Update

• Manned passport booths may become a thing of the past as border officials prepare to trial a new **face recognition system in the UK**. From this summer, various airline passengers will be screened using facial technology, which aims to match individuals to the biometric chips in their passports. Officials believe the new system will improve security and ease congestion. Home Office minister, Liam Byrne said, "Britain's border security is now among the toughest in the world and tougher checks do take time, but we don't want long waits. So the UK Border Agency will soon test new automatic gates for British and European citizens". If the trial proves successful, the system will be rolled out at all major UK airports.

• Taiwanese airline, **Eva Air**, looks set to launch a twice-weekly service to the cities of Miyazaki and Komatsu in Japan from its Taipei hub. The carrier has also increased the number of flights to Sendai – from two to five flights per week – giving travellers more options. Eva Air already provides 14 flights per week to Tokyo, seven to

Sapporo, 10 to Osaka, seven to Fukuoka and five to Nagoya.

• The **Mexican Tourism Board** has announced that it intends to target US travellers who ordinarily holiday in Europe. According to Mexico's Secretary of Tourism, Rodolfo Elizondo-Torres, tourism was responsible for a purported US\$13 billion in revenue in 2007. US nationals make up almost two-thirds of all foreign visitors but international travel is also estimated to be on the up. "The diversification of Mexican tourism offerings has turned into positive results, with an increase of 5.7 per cent in the average expenditure of foreign visitors," said Elizondo.

• The number of overseas **visitors journeying to the USA** is reported to have accelerated this year, improving upon the 10 per cent jump in 2007. Latest numbers released by the US Department of Commerce state that 3.4 million international visitors travelled to the USA in January this year, up 11 percentage points on 2007's result. However, tourism officials remain unconvinced and say the country is

attracting two million fewer overseas visitors than previously – 23.9 million in 2007 compared with 26 million pre-September 11. Roger Dow, Chief Executive of the US Travel Industry Association, said, "With the dollar the way it is, the business should be extraordinary. We're just not getting the people we should be".

• Two budget airlines are looking to join forces in a bid to reach a wider clientele and service more destinations. As part of a marketing agreement, Spanish carrier, **Clickair**, and **Germanwings**, the leading low-cost airline in Germany, will make select routes available to each other's passengers. Clickair currently services cities such as Frankfurt, Berlin and Munich but consumers will soon be able to visit www.clickair.com and opt to fly to either Stuttgart or Cologne, for example, and will be redirected to the Germanwings website.

• **Gold Coast Tourism** aims to lure back its lucrative Asian market through a new advertising campaign. A 32-second commercial will reach 26

million households and 650,000 hotel rooms in the Asia-Pacific region. "This is a targeted advertisement with a clear message to convert interest in our most significant group of international markets," noted Gold Coast Tourism Chairperson, Paul Donovan. The commercial could also hold the key to opening up new travel markets for long-haul budget carrier, AirAsia X, which is supporting the project, pointing out its direct flights and cheaper airfares for passengers travelling to the Gold Coast.

• **EasyJet**, Europe's leading low-cost carrier, has announced it will be adding six new routes this summer. The airline will begin servicing the Greek island of Mykonos – twice weekly – and commence daily services from London Gatwick to Montpellier, France and Ajaccio and Bastia in Corsica. Meanwhile, passengers flying from Manchester can take advantage of a daily service to Malaga, Spain and a twice-weekly service to the island of Crete. Up to 230,000 passengers are expected to travel on the six new routes over the next 12 months.

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