

Alphe Korea offers Asian focus

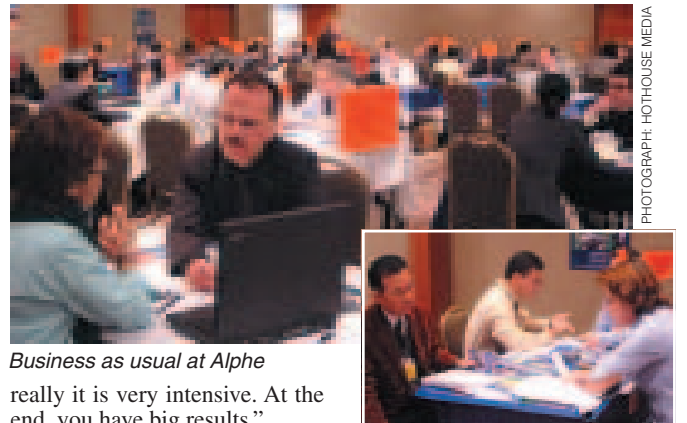
Next issue

In our June issue, **Special Report** examines the work experience sector and finds out about the types of placement available, while **Market Report** provides an update on trends in the German marketplace.

Direction looks at the home tuition sector and **Feedback** finds out what students in France think about their study abroad experience. **City Focus** visits Boston, **Destination** reports from Ireland, and **Status** has the latest market data from Australia.

The Alphe workshop arrived at Seoul in Korea earlier this year, providing an event with a clear Asian focus for a number of language schools, independent secondary schools and universities from around the world. Taking place in March at the Coex International Hotel, Alphe Korea welcomed 51 educators and over 100 agents. The majority of agents represented agencies in Korea, but 19 other Asia-based agents also attended.

Participants of the workshop were largely pleased with the event, praising the quality of agents that they met and the range of schools and education providers on offer. Mauro Cavagnaro of Italian design school, IED in Italy, said, "For me, it has been really a good experience, because I met many agencies I didn't know, even if Korea is my biggest market." He added, "The workshop seems small at a first glance, but



Business as usual at Alphe

really it is very intensive. At the end, you have big results."

Robin Adams, from KTC Language Institute in Canada, added, "Alphe Korea was very successful and allowed me to speak to agents I have been trying to talk with for some time. This was a perfect opportunity on a formal and informal basis."

Many of the agencies attending were members of Korean

agency association, Kosa. Member, Jong-In Hyun, from My Study, said that he was not familiar with many of the schools at the workshop, especially the Irish schools. "This was a good opportunity," he said. "We need to do marketing of Irish schools, there are too many Korean students in the USA, Canada and UK already."

Industry issues - agents speak out

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

Q Has student payment ever been a problem and how do you resolve the issue if a student books and then can't find the money to pay for the course by the due date?



"We never have payment problems with students. They have to pay before departure otherwise we

just do not issue the travel documents, [such as] address of the school, address of their accommodation, etc. Typically, students will pay a deposit at the time of booking, and then the outstanding balance will be paid according to their own pace, bearing in mind that the balance must reach us at the latest one week before departure. A few long-term students apply for a bank loan, but this is only a minority."
Gerald Soubeyran, Effective, France

"Student payment can be a problem. We offer two options if a student books and then can't find the money to pay for the course by the due date: they can either postpone the course or cancel the

programme. Usually students pay in advance, but we have some options for students who don't have all the money by the start date. One is a credit card instalment and another one is a bank loan. Both options we have negotiated with a major credit card company and a bank to offer to our students. Many students take this option because sometimes that's the only way for them to pay."

Eduardo Heidemann, AF Intercâmbio, Brazil



"Our office had, for three years, a placement service for English language courses. We found that short

language courses were the most attractive and affordable option for Bulgarians to study in the UK.

Payment of fees was not a problem for us. When we assisted students, however, we did ask them to pay full fees in advance. Thus, we guaranteed payment to the schools

and also assured entry clearance officers that the fees had been paid in full in advance."

Yana Docheva, Study in the UK – British Council, Bulgaria



"The payment is a problem for Russian students, of course. Ninety-eight per cent of students who go abroad are paid for by their parents. Older students, from about 22 to 26 years old, are usually paid for by the company they work in. We haven't used a pay-in-instalments system up until now. This is not usual practice for Russia."

Ekaterina Anisimova-Ignatieva, SHC "Sputnik", Russia

"Student payment has never been a problem to us. All our students have planned their finances well before going overseas, mostly are fully supported by their parents and the rest arrange [financing] by

themselves. We have been contacted by banks that are interested in offering loans to students, and occasionally we do have some students who enquire [about this]. Nevertheless, no students actually rely on a loan for overseas studies."

Yong Tang, United Education Service, Taiwan



"Normally, student payment has not been a problem for Belta associates. Students' parents often help [with] payment. Besides, the students that can afford to study abroad come from the middle to upper classes. Frequently, the students that need to pay for themselves are employees and they pay with their own salaries. In both cases, we offer a pay-in-instalments [system], by credit card or credit bank."

Eduardo Camargo, Belta President, Brazil

Irish marketing association, MEI-Relsa, organised a reception for the delegation of 14 participating Irish language schools and invited agents and other guests during the workshop.

Other agencies at the workshop came from Singapore, New Zealand, China, Japan, India, Mongolia and Vietnam. Michael Lu, of Chongqing Rite International Business Consulting in China, told *Language Travel Magazine*, “[Alphe Korea] has been a benefit for our developing business. I found many valuable corporation partners to benefit our work and develop new markets.”

Matthew Northover, Alphe Organiser, said he was pleased with the workshop format, although it differed slightly from other Alphe events. “Next year, Alphe will be organising an Asian roadshow, with Alphe Korea followed by our first Alphe Japan in Tokyo,” he said. □

Gwea holds its first show

THE GLOBAL Work Experience Association (Gwea), a subsidiary of the Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations (Fiyto), held its first Work Experience Travel Market in March this year in Cannes, France.

Over 100 organisations interested in selling or buying work experience programmes attended the two-day workshop, which also included two seminars about issues in the work experience sector. David Smith, Director of Student Work Abroad Programme in Canada, was keynote speaker at the event.

The workshop had a unique format, in that neither buyers nor the sellers of work experience were based at their own tables. Attendees met interested parties at designated tables and at scheduled times, organised by Gwea.

Andrea Garutti from CI, Central de Intercambio in Brazil was in Cannes to promote CI's inbound programmes. She commented, “The number of buyers and sellers organisations were well balanced [and] the meetings were well matched. We surely achieved our target of promoting our incoming products”.

Armen Karapetyan, from International Exchange Center in Russia, agreed that the travel market was useful. “It helps to address common concerns of youth travel market operators,” he said.

Paula Jamieson, Director of Global Lifestyles Canada, said she was pleased to see almost all continents well represented at the event. “Most of our clients have been, up to now, from Japan, so it was very stimulating to work with [other] organisations.” □

On the move



Emma McEwen has been appointed the Marketing & Corporate Sales Executive for EC

(previously European Centre of English Language Studies) at its head office in Malta. Ms McEwen joins the company from the hospitality industry. She will be promoting business English programmes and marketing the schools. The EC group is expanding with schools in Malta, Gozo, Cambridge and Brighton.



Chris Nolan has joined the LAL Group based in Munich, Germany, as Marketing and

Sales Director. Mr Nolan has 12 years' experience in language travel marketing management. His main focus at LAL will be to set up a central marketing and sales function, increase sales and develop new products and destinations. He commented, “LAL's expertise is both as an agent and as a year-round operator of schools.”



Gary Smith returns to the ToEIC testing business in Japan and southeast Asia

after four years setting up Pacific Gateway International College in Brisbane, Australia. During his directorship, the school grew to over 300 students. Management of the school has fallen to Babette Furstner, under the direction of Sammy Takahashi, President of the Pacific Gateway business in Vancouver, Canada.



Kevin McNally has established a new English language school in London, UK with the help of

two partners. Bloomsbury International opened in February and has so far welcomed more than 100 students. Mr McNally was previously employed at the Hampstead School of English.



Anja Finkel, who worked as Sales Manager for Don Quijote in Spain for three years, has left her

position to move to Switzerland. Her replacement, Johan van Wegen (below), brings extensive

experience in developing international business to the role. His experience includes working for global travel distribution system Amadeus in Spain and in its Asia-Pacific office.

Agency of the month



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

This month, Access Language Centre in Australia nominates GLS Sprachenzentrum in Germany.



Sawsan Salah, General Manager of the school, explains their decision:

“There are so many reasons why we would like to nominate GLS Sprachenzentrum. With GLS, I feel our working relationship is a true partnership. We are both focused on delivering the best possible programmes and services to the students. Therefore, there is continuous dialogue about improving what we offer and coming up with ideas for new programmes and services. We respect GLS staff as the experts in their market and they respect our staff as experts in the programmes and services we deliver.

One of the most important factors in the success of an agent/school relationship is the efficiency in dealing with the applications on both sides. We are always grateful to receive applications and full documents from GLS on time. They observe deadlines and always reply to our inquiries as soon as they receive them. This is very helpful for both our organisations.”

AAIEP to hold agent reception at Nafsa

THE American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP) is pro-actively working with agents by holding a networking and information reception during the Nafsa conference at the end of May in Baltimore, USA.

Agents are being invited to meet a number of AAIEP members from across the country to learn more about their programmes and services offered. A scholarship for an English language programme is also up for grabs, with agents eligible for one prize draw entry for every AAIEP member they meet.

The reception is scheduled for Tuesday 25 May. For more information, agents should visit www.aaiep.org □

Talk to us

Do you have much demand from clients who are looking for teacher training courses? What do they expect programmes to entail and how do you find out about good courses? Talk to us by emailing mail@houthousemedia.com by 21 May.