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Melbourne Extends USA Reach for Business Events

The Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB) has extended its marketing and PR reach in the U.S. market, resulting in a record \$3.48 million worth of publicity in the past nine months.

Sandra Chipchase, MCVB's CEO, said that as part of the organisation's strategy to increase Melbourne's international reach, a New York-based public relations firm, LDPR, was engaged earlier this year.

"This partnership has maximised the opportunities created by our established representation office in the U.S, through Mondotels, and has increased Melbourne's profile as a world-leading destination for Business Events in this key market.

"Media activity has focussed on Melbourne's new hotel and convention facility developments, in particular the Melbourne Convention Centre, which has been of great interest to the US market as a result of its world-leading innovations in sustainability, design, technology and use of local produce and wine.

"This interest also resulted in a targeted partnership with Sky Radio Online, promoting the Melbourne Convention Centre through an 'Environmental Watch' program.

"This program is set to feature on the Business & Technology Channels on American Airlines later this year, and on the Sky Radio Online website, reaching an audience of around 13 million executive business travellers and listeners. It will also broadcast on CNN Airport TV, which reaches 16 million viewers monthly.

"We have also publicised Melbourne's strong green credentials, our suite of tools which make planning a green event in Melbourne easier than ever before, and our continued investment in our conference infrastructure, despite the current economic climate – topics which have each been of high interest to the U.S. market.

"By securing media placements in significant Business Events trade media such as *Business Traveller*, and leading business news websites such as Yahoo! Finance, Reuters and CNBC, we have reached an audience of 230 million."

Ms Chipchase also said that promotional activity in the U.S. has included hosting key Business Events decision makers and targeted journalists to events such as New York's 'Taste of Tennis', which featured leading tennis players and chefs from around the world, including from Australia.

"Having a presence at such events allows us to promote Melbourne as Australia's Major Events Capital, home to events such as the Australian Open Tennis Championship, which provide even more of an incentive to hold a Business Event in Melbourne.

"We look forward to continuing to extend our reach into the U.S. through our innovative sales, marketing and PR activity to increase visitation to Melbourne from this key Business Events market," Ms Chipchase said.

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