

# **UK OFFICE**

## **July 2012 REPORT**

**Prepared by: Venessa Alexander**  
**UK Director**

### **Meetings**

#### **Rooster PR**

Meeting with Rooster to discuss and finalise next quarter PR plan

#### **SeaWorld Parks**

Meeting held with Simon Parry, Head of Key Accounts & Sales Operations and Ruth Roseweir, Marketing Manager to discuss future joint opportunities for our new fiscal year. Opportunities discussed included retail in-store promotions, staff incentives, training sponsorships with their key retail accounts in the UK & Ireland, inclusion in their quarterly retail newsletter and joint fam trips in the spring of 2013.

#### **Visit Florida Event**

The UK office attended the summer barbeque event held by Visit Florida at the Kensington Roof Gardens to introduce Governor Rick Scott to the UK Florida Travel Industry.

### **TRADE LIAISON**

- Barrhead Travel/Visit Orlando – The co-op marketing activity with Barrhead Travel and Visit Orlando has now been completely finalised and fully approved. The final element to the campaign is the 8 page full colour direct mail brochure to 3000 of their customers which is in the process of being printed and will be distributed in the next few weeks. The campaign is due to end next month and results will follow.
- TUI Specialist (Hayes & Jarvis/Thomson Tailormade) – The first of our footer banner ads in conjunction with TUI Specialist and Visit Orlando has now been approved and the Thomson Tailor-made edition has been sent out to their database. Preparations are also being made on further weekly direct e-mails to their consumer database, online PR activity from the PPC and SEO team as well as offers to their retail agents. Tui Specialist have also agreed to be our tour operator of the month partner for our UK Facebook page and as such will provide special offers to our area on a weekly basis to be posted on the site.
- VSPC / United Airlines Fam – Flights have now been secured with United Airlines to host a dedicated Irish Travel Agent Fam to our area from the 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Details have been forwarded to VSPC and accommodation/attractions are being sourced at the moment. Invitations will be sent to the agents in August. The first night of this trip will be hosted in Tampa.

- Virgin Retail – The retail campaign in partnership with Virgin Holidays/Virgin Retail & SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment has now finalised and we are just waiting for sales results to be forwarded.
- Virgin Holidays/Visit Florida/VSPC – St. Petersburg/Clearwater featured as one of the 8 key partners within the Florida promotion we ran in conjunction with VISIT FLORIDA. The campaign included a 3 prong approach looking at combining online, press and in-store retail activity to promote the destination and the partners. Activity included: MSN online hub, a 4 page insert in The Times (Saturday edition within Travel section) and a Retail promotion across the top 50 retail concessions. The results are as follows:
  - MSN Results:
    - 329,005 page views
    - 62,711 unique users
    - 69,204 people clicked through from the homepage after doing the quiz
    - 2.9 minute average dwell time
  - The Times insert saw a total of 129 calls made to the dedicated tracking telephone number as part of this promotion.
  - Virgin Holidays saw some very positive numbers into St Petersburg/Clearwater over the period the campaign ran and these are as follows:
    - St. Petersburg:
      - Winter '12 numbers booked YOY up 27% and summer '13 numbers up 13% YOY.
    - Clearwater:
      - Winter '12 numbers booked YOY up 48% and summer '13 numbers flat YOY.
- White Stuff Brand Affinity Campaign – The campaign finished in mid-July having reached a total of 1,268,396 UK consumers through a variety of in-store POS, online, and social media. We received 9704 competition entries with an opt in of 1694 and equivalent media value of £53,856
- Facebook Competition – The Facebook ad campaign which ran from late June to mid-July increased fans of the UK page from 75 to just over 3000. The campaign included a competition in conjunction with Virgin Holidays to win a holiday to VSPC for a family of four.
- Liaison with VSPC US office re 2 Danish media opportunities, one through Spies Denmark and one through the Danish Visit USA Committee.
- Conference call with Chris Ellis at Visit Orlando with regards the Scandinavian Sales Mission scheduled for January 2013.
- Travel Uni – Travel Uni have updated our online travel agent training programme and we will be re-launching this via Travel Weekly, Travel Uni E-blasts and Selling Long

Haul. We shall be offering 10 goodie bags for agents that complete all four of the training modules, winners to be picked at random at the end of September.

- Visit USA Ireland – A date in September has been confirmed for the Visit USA Ireland online training webinar for Irish Travel Agents. We will be conducting a webinar training session to a selection of Irish Travel Agents and will be able to show our UK Power Point Training presentation as well as talk to the agents and answer any questions they may have about our destination.
- Cosmos Holidays – Training has been secured with the Cosmos Holidays call centre staff in Stockport. A date in November has been confirmed.
- BA Holidays – Provided British Airways Holidays with Magic Mike information for them to advise their call centre staff and also provided them with input on additional properties in our area that are not already in their hotel accommodation product portfolio.
- North America Travel Service – Provided one of the North America Travel Service Sales Reps with up to date literature to use when visiting Travel Agents in the north of the UK.
- Althams Travel – Provided Althams Travel in Chorley with up to date Visitor's Guides and Area Maps for a Florida weekend promotion they are holding in store mid July. Giveaways were also dispatched for them to use in promoting our area.
- Travel 2 - Travel 2 are launching an internal campaign with their call centre staff based in Glasgow to increase the revenue for Florida and are launching a campaign to provide staff with on the spot prizes to give out once a booking to our area has been made. Provided Travel 2 with a selection of giveaways.
- Travel Republic –The E-newsletter blast that we are part of in conjunction with Travel Republic and Busch Gardens Tampa Bay has now been sent to their consumer database of over 1million subscribers. As reported last month, the e-newsletter footer ad was provided to us free of charge and will link to our area hotels landing page.

## **ENQUIRIES:**

Telephone/website enquiries for information and/or literature

67

## **MARKET INTELLIGENCE:**

03 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **Travel agents aren't extinct, reacts industry**

Travel agents and the industry has hit back at a Mintel report which suggested travel agents are becoming extinct. Businesses leapt to push that the industry is still going strong and has the expertise after a Daily Mail report said seven in 10 holidays were booked online last year and 52% think websites offer better value for money. Travel agents hit back on the report

through Twitter, saying Mintel had not differentiated between chain and independents. Laurence Hicks, director at CLC Leisure added that travel agents have overcome other threats and will continue to. "This story crops up with monotonous regularity. Even before the advent of the internet there were predictions that travel agents would disappear when tour operators started selling direct. And yet many years on they are still here along the length and breadth of the country," he said.

03 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **Air travel demand slows amid Europe woes**

Passenger demand for air travel slowed last month both within Europe and globally, according to two sets of statistics released today. Despite a 1.4% growth in passengers during this year's first quarter for members of European Regions Airline Association (ERA), the figure is lower than previous results. With a 3.4% reduction in seat capacity, the European carriers posted a 4% higher load factor at 64.9%. However Mike Ambrose, director general at ERA warned that the tough start to the year is likely to continue amongst the 'fragile economy'. "Full recovery is clearly some distance away. Europe's regulators and politicians need to be fully aware of the economic state of the industry when considering initiatives that could add further cost and/or operational burdens," he added. Other data released by IATA showed demand was up 4.5% globally for May compared to last year with a below-average load factor of 77.6%.

03 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **North America arrivals surge 11%**

International arrivals to North America surged 11% in March 2012, according to the latest data from PATA. The strong result was supported by the continued growth of arrivals to Canada (+9%) and the US (+14%). While tourism was largely driven by strong intra-regional travel flows, arrivals from Germany and the UK jumped 30% during the month after several years of sluggish growth. Arrivals from Japan set new monthly arrivals records to the US and Mexico. Meanwhile, the San Francisco Travel Association has revealed its visitor arrivals were up to more than 2.8 million during 2011, up 10% year-on-year. The UK remains the city's top market with more than 300,000 Brits heading to the city last year (up 9%). Its figures for June 2012 are also up.

03 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Cheap holidays is most searched term online**

'Cheap holidays' is the most used search term for travellers looking for holidays online, showing that cost is an increasingly important factor for holidaymakers. During May, 2.7 million searches were made with holiday-related key words and a fifth of them used "cheap holidays" to find what they were looking for, according to a report by Greenlight . 16% searched for "holidays", 6% for "direct holidays" while ski, turkey, package, all-inclusive and last minute holidays accounted for 15% between them. Other keywords made up 43%. The Holidays Sector Report, which is to analyse the most searched terms in the travel sector, found that searches for cheap holidays actually increased from April to May. Searches using generic words were the most popular, accounting for 66% of searches while 15% were for short-haul destinations and 19% for long haul in May.

04 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Study reveals busiest day for holiday searches**

Travel companies could be wasting money by paying to advertise on search engine Google at all the wrong times. The latest report on the holiday sector by search marketing agency Greenlight found that the most travel-related queries on Google are on Mondays and gradually decrease towards the weekend. Saturdays see the fewest holiday queries and Sundays have only slightly more, yet the amount travel companies spend on paid ads on Google at weekends suggests they are over-estimating how many customers are searching for holidays on Saturday and Sundays. Greenlight tracked, recorded and analysed the behaviour of consumers online in May for its latest sector report. For the week beginning May 14, which was selected at random, by far the busiest day for holiday searches was Monday. Wednesday was the next busiest, after which searches declined until Sunday. When Greenlight looked at the advertising behaviour of four of the largest travel companies, including First Choice, Low Cost Holidays, On The Beach, Travel Republic Thomas Cook and Thomson, it found they have similar bidding strategies for keywords on Google. However, the majority of advertisers didn't seem to realise that Monday was the busiest day and Saturday and Sunday were much quieter.

04 July 2012 – Source Travolution

### **OTA's paying the price for airline failures**

The new UK Atol consumer protection rules brought in April are hugely unfair to online travel agents but they would be unwise to fight the government regulator over them. That was the view of Chris Photi, senior partner at leading industry accountancy firm White Hart Associates, who was speaking at the latest Grant Thornton update today. Photi said the Flight-Plus reform, which came into force on April 30, was simply a revenue raising exercise by the government and had nothing to do with enhancing consumer payment protection. The regulations mean agents selling dynamically packaged holidays including a flight plus accommodation must be licensed and pay a £2.50 per person charge to the CAA. Photi used the example of one of his clients, Lowcost Holiday Group, to illustrate the clear unfairness in the system because it does not include holidays sold by airlines. He said, as had been pointed out by Lowcost chief executive Paul Evans previously, a customer can buy a holiday on the Lowcost Holidays website and have to pay the £2.50 but on EasyJet Holidays' site, which Lowcost operates, they do not. "It's the identical product, sold by the identical call centre, off the identical computer system," Photi said. "How is that clarity? It's as clear as mud. "Who has this affected most? Online travel agents. True, [trade association] Abta will tell you that 600 plus of their members are directly affected. "But all this Flight-Plus legislation was directed at was 15 to 20 of the larger online travel agents – that's who the CAA wants the £2.50 from. It does not want it from the mom and pop agents." The Atol scheme is backed by a trust, the Air Travel Trust Fund (ATTF), that is used to pay out when firms go bust and to repatriate holidaymakers. It is currently £25 million in the red and Photi said it is the need to replenish this fund that has driven the recent reform. The UK's largest online agent Travel Republic has fought a lengthy battle with the CAA over Atol winning a criminal court case and appeal brought against it. The agency has since said it is seeking an Atol since Flight-Plus came in, and Photi advised firms not to fight the regulator even though he believes OTAs do not need to protect customers through Atol. Photi said he has represented three OTAs with similar profiles looking to reduce the level of bonding Abta also requires from retail members since the introduction of Flight-Plus. "They [the OTAs] take customer payments by credit card or debit card, so 97% of the money that they collect is already protected by the Consumer Credit Act 1974. There's hardly a consumer protection issue

here. "The three OTAs source 97% of their flights from five airlines; three run by vertically integrated tour operators, the rest with two other airlines, and you can no doubt guess who they are. "Of that 97%, 95% of their flying is with those other two airlines. The government clearly doesn't think those airlines are going to fail because it hasn't brought in an all-flights levy. "This is sold to us as consumer protection but it's not - it's a money-raising exercise to fill a hole that has not been made by travel agents." Photi said the big claims made on the ATTF in recent years had, in fact, not been from agents but from virtually integrated operators with airlines who sold seats to the travel industry. "This is an unfair scheme which is why the industry does not like it. Nevertheless, never pick a fight with a government regulator. Is there going to be compliance? Yes, broadly there is."

05 July 2012 – Source Travolution

### **OFT forces airlines to stop hiding debit card charges**

A dozen airlines have been forced to change their pricing policy by the Office of Fair Trading. Ryanair, Thomas Cook, Thomson, Aer Lingus, Eastern Airways, easyJet, Flybe, German Wings, Jet2, Lufthansa, BMI Baby, and Wizz Air have agreed to include debit card surcharges in the headline price. They agreed to the change after an OFT investigation into airlines which sprung charges on customers towards the end of the booking process. The investigation was launched following a 'super-complaint' from consumer rights magazine Which?. Most of the airlines, including Eastern Airways, easyJet, Flybe, German Wings, Lufthansa, Thomas Cook, Thomson (TUI) and Wizz Air, have already made changes to their pricing. The rest have got until August 1 to comply with regards to advertising and fully complete further changes over the coming months. OFT chief executive Clive Maxwell said: "This is a great outcome for the millions of people who buy flights online. "It is important that the cost presented when they search for a flight is realistic and that they are not surprised by extra charges. Otherwise it is harder for them to shop around for the best deal. "We made it clear from the start that we would use all of our enforcement powers, including court action if necessary, but are pleased to have reached agreement with the airlines before court proceedings were required." Gareth Williams, Skyscanner co-founder and CEO, welcomed the move. "Skyscanner has included card charges in the airline prices we show for some time, allowing our users to compare fares more easily," he said. "We believe it's important that pricing is as transparent as possible so that consumers are aware of the true cost of their flight. It is great that these 12 airlines will now be incorporating card charges into their pricing and we hope other airlines will follow suit." Following OFT recommendations last year, the Government has announced plans to bring forward legislation to ban excessive debit and credit card surcharges across the economy. The OFT estimates that debit and credit card surcharging in the airlines sector cost consumers £300 million a year.

05 July 2012 – Source Travolution

### **Wettest June on record boosts holiday bookings**

Operators are reporting a year-on-year increase in sales in the past few weeks, which they are putting down to the wettest June on record. On the Beach claimed its bookings for European destinations were up 20% YOY in the past fortnight. Thomson said it had seen a similar rise in online searches last month and an independent study for Thomas Cook earlier this year found that bad weather makes one in five Brits at least think about booking a holiday. According to the Met office, the period from April to June was the wettest since records began in 1910, said ABTA. It was also the second dullest June on record with just 119.2 hours of sunshine, narrowly missing out on the record of 115.4 hours set in 1987. And it was

the coolest June since 1991. Head of online marketing at Thomson Nathan Timmins said: "Over the last month the Balearics, Spain, Greece, Tunisia and Morocco have proved popular as Brits look to escape to sandy beaches, beautiful weather and resorts that they know and love. "With rain forecast for the rest of the week we imagine that the website will keep attracting more users, as people look to research and book their holidays or just get some inspiration and take their mind off the rain!" On the Beach marketing director Alistair Daly said : "The bad weather has clearly had a positive effect on Brits booking foreign holidays and we have seen a 20% rise in sales of holidays to destinations across Europe over the past couple of weeks." Thomas Cook said it had fewer holidays available than this time last year and although the operator has cut capacity it said this was also partly due to the poor weather.

05 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Virgin adds anti-APD slogan to e-tickets**

Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Holidays are to display a message criticising APD on their e-tickets. The tickets will also include a link to A Fair Tax on Flying's website to generate awareness amongst its customers. Announced by Sir Richard Branson in Mexico today, the carrier will also run a 'APD sale' for its new Cancun route to highlight the disproportionate banding system. Branson made the announcements as part of his continued backlash against the tax.

Adding his voice to the A Fair Tax on Flying campaign, Branson said he estimates the tax will amount to £10 million a day during July and August.

12 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **10<sup>th</sup> of MP's back APD Motion**

One in 10 UK MPs have backed a Parliamentary motion to study the impact of Air Passenger Duty on the UK's economy and employment levels. Sixty MPs from several parties have added their names to the motion, named EDM 174, after three weeks of the A Fair Tax on Flying campaign. The campaign has prompted 13,000 people to write to their local MP about the tax. Urging for continued push on the campaign, Sir Richard Branson added his voice to the campaign this week with slogans on its e-tickets. "More than 60 MPs have now added their names to EDM 174, calling on the Government to commission new research into the impact of Air Passenger Duty (APD) on the UK economy," said Darren Caplan, chief executive of the Airport Operators Association (AOA).

12 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Florida quadruples UK marketing budget**

Florida has quadrupled its marketing budget for the UK and European market, where it will spend \$2m this financial year. Visit Florida president and CEO Chris Thompson said the additional funding, announced on July 1, would allow the state to pay for joint initiatives with new and existing airline and tour operator partners in the UK. The money will be shared with France and Germany, but the UK is Florida's largest European market. Visit Florida will deploy the resources through its new worldwide marketing and advertising agency, SapientNitro, which officially began working with the tourist board on July 1. Speaking during a visit to the UK by Florida's Governor Rick Scott, Thompson said the UK market to Florida had been flat for the past four years and at 1.3m visitors last year it was well below the numbers reached in 1990. Bookings are expected to be flat again this year, despite a positive start to 2012, but Visit Florida UK director Colin Brodie said forward bookings for

2013 were "buoyant". "Easter 2013 is ahead of this year, I think because there is a lot of pent up demand," he said. "We are not going to see a huge boom, but people are booking." Florida accounts for 7.3% of the UK long-haul market and Thompson said it was keen to maintain its share. "That alone is a big challenge," he added. Visit Florida will launch a new advertising campaign in the UK later this year, which will also make use of social media to try to attract young travellers. "The challenge is to speak to young people with the right message while maintaining our core market," said Thompson. "We need to reach young travellers, who have the whole world at their fingertips, with the right message at the right time." Airlines significantly reduced capacity to Florida four years ago, although British Airways and Virgin Atlantic have more recently added extra flights. Visit Florida would love a flight from Heathrow to Orlando, said Brodie, but it is also trying to encourage services from regional airports. The state has \$250,000 of grants to encourage airlines to launch flights from new destinations, said Visit Florida vice president of sales and marketing Eileen Forrow. "We would like new flights from Manchester or Glasgow or anywhere in the UK," she said. Governor Scott met with Prime Minister David Cameron at the Farnborough air show, during which Thompson said he was sure the issue of the UK's rising air passenger duty would have come up. "The tax has had a huge impact on long-haul travel, but the US is faring better than the Caribbean," said Brodie. "However, it's still a charge and it puts people off."

16 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

#### **PTD proposals for 'late 2012'**

Proposals on changes to the Package Travel Directive (PTD) could be announced later this year, ABTA has revealed. The association said the European Commission has been in discussions over the revised directive since 2009, with plans to encourage more package sales; remove confusion over holiday sales in Europe and ensure the same protection for holidaymakers across Europe. Proposals could be published late this year or early 2013, with ABTA making the case for airlines to be included in holiday sales and ensure fair, clear protection. It also voiced concerns over plans for a 'right to withdrawal' clause after a customer buys a holiday.

17 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

#### **Orlando breaks tourist record**

Orlando saw another record-breaking year for tourists last year with 55.1 million visitors. The figures were 7.2% up compared to 2010, with international travel up 3.5% to 3.8 million. Of these 767,000 were from the UK, the second biggest international market behind Canada. The announcement came after the Governor of Florida attended a trade lunch last week in London to thank the travel trade for support. He said the entire state welcomed 87 million tourists last year and expects this to increase in 2012.

19 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

#### **Travel 'performing well' in online retail sales**

Online sales in the travel sector have increased 18% in the first half of the year compared to 2011's H1, according to a new index. Latest figures from the IMRG Capgemini e-Retail Sales Index found British consumers spent a total of £34.9 billion online in the first six months of this year, with £6 billion of that in June alone. Online sales in the travel sector were up 6% last month compared to May, with Capgemini attributing the rise to Britain's

weather and the European Football Championships. Other sectors that saw larger sales increases were for gifts (47% up year-on-year); electricals (35%) and health and beauty (25%). The analysts now expect the Olympics to show further disruption to its index. "The retail sector has experienced a very turbulent few months, with the Queen's Jubilee, the football and the weather all playing their part," explained Chris Webster, head of retail consulting and technology at Capgemini.

19 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Daily Mail launches travel website**

The owners of the Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday and Metro have launched a new commercial travel website MailTravel.co.uk. The new bookings site is being setup by Andy Hancock, who has previously held management posts at Wendy Wu tours, First Choice and Sunsail. "Travel products sold under the Mail Travel brand have direct access to the affluent Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday readership," he said. "We hand pick and create great travel experiences tailored to our readership, as well as offering relevant, timely and targeted flash offers. Our new online sales capability will deliver increasing volume, allow us to diversify our product mix and centralise the customer journey." Key suppliers include Riviera Travel and Newmarket Holidays. Mail Travel will soon be integrated into the Mail Online site, accessing its 5.7 million unique daily visitors. The call centre will be operated by Travel Solutions Group, part of the P&P Associates group of companies. Hancock adds: "Tour Operators and destinations know from experience that for brand building and awareness there's no better place to advertise than the Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday and Mail Online. Mail Travel offers an additional and effective distribution channel through a new consumer facing distribution avenue."

20 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **Two million head overseas this weekend**

Two million British holidaymakers are expected to head overseas in the next four days as schools break up for the summer holidays. ABTA expects most holidaymakers to head to Spain with the Canary and Balearic Islands some of the most popular destinations. Turkey and Greece are also popular destinations, with many taking advantage of the euro exchange rate and cheaper in-resort prices. Thomson and First Choice are set to fly 46,000 customers from 18 airports during the weekend, also mentioning the Balearics and Turkey as popular destinations. Cape Town, Mexico, Greece, Florida and Egypt are also amongst the top selling destinations, with a trend towards more seven-night stays. The company has also absorbed the increased Spanish VAT rates. "I think people are looking to spend their hard earned cash on holidays they know they will deliver and which have their meals and lots of activities included," said Steve Perridge, general manager of late trading at Thomson and First Choice.

20 July 2012 – Source Travolution

### **Barrhead plots growth in Australia and the US with revamped site**

Glasgow-based travel agent Barrhead Travel is hoping to launch a new website selling European cruise and long-haul travel to Americans and Australians. The retailer is hoping its local knowledge and expertise will make it stand out against US rivals for American customers looking to purchase cruises emanating from the UK and other European ports. Barrhead already sells flights to both nations from its [www.flightsdirect.com](http://www.flightsdirect.com) website, and is currently revamping its [www.holidaysuperstore.com](http://www.holidaysuperstore.com) and [www.holidaysuperstore.co.uk](http://www.holidaysuperstore.co.uk) sites

to launch its new international venture. Speaking to Travolution, Munro said he was in the process researching the American business, which he described as very different to that in the UK. "I don't know how the Americans sell British cruises from Southampton, but we think people in America would rather deal with a Scottish agent when buying a European cruise than one in the States. "Most people will want to book a flight with a cruise and some land arrangements, such as taking in London, Stratford-upon-Avon, maybe even Edinburgh and Paris too. And the way cruise is sold in America is very different at the moment," he said. Munro added: "There are 300 million Americans, so we don't need many of them for this to be a nice little business."

23 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **APD campaign gets more group weight**

A Fair Tax on Flying campaign has gathered further support from business groups this week after seeing a boost thanks to Richard Branson. The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Group are the latest organisations to voice their concerns over the tax and promote the campaign. Since its launch five weeks ago more than 75,000 people have emailed to MPs against the tax. It received a significant boost last week when Virgin boss Richard Branson said he would waive the fee from selected holidays and promote the campaign on e-tickets. Around 75 MPs from various parties have now signed a parliamentary motion linked to APD, with more business groups being asked to back the campaign.

23 July 2012 – Source Travelmole

### **Thomas Cook plans further disposal**

Thomas Cook is to sell its in-house travel insurance business which could raise £100 million for the tour operator. Advisors at PWC are close to being appointed to sell White Horse Insurance, the Dublin-based operation, reports the Sunday Times. The sale is the latest disposal by Thomas Cook which is undergoing a massive cost-cutting exercise. It is expected to interest trade bidders and private equity firms.

25 July 2012 – Source Travel Daily

### **Fifth of Brits planning Olympic Break**

Nearly a fifth (19%) of Brits are planning a holiday during the Olympics, according to new statistics from ABTA. The association has said around nine million Brits are taking a holiday during the games, with around two million people still undecided if they are going to take a break. However, most holidaymakers (59%) said they are taking a holiday at their usual holiday time, which just happens to fall on the Olympic weeks. Around 11% want to specifically escape the Olympics fever, while 7% cited the bad weather as their holiday decision.