



Abercrombie & Kent Travel Group (AKTG) Creates new Global Advisory Board and Strengthens Trade Leadership Brand Focus

LONDON, UK | AUGUST 2025

AKTG today announced the formation of an industry-leading *Global AKTG Advisory Board* designed to strengthen its travel advisor partnerships and support strategic growth across its entire luxury portfolio worldwide.

AKTG will engage more closely with global trade leaders in all source markets with its new Global Advisory Board under the leadership of **Marett Taylor**, while **Shawn Johnson** and **Matias Lira** will continue to strengthen trade partnerships in the USA and LATAM through key SVP roles. Each will lead trade sales teams for the Group's flagship brands, Abercrombie & Kent and Crystal, with dedicated focus on their respective brands.

Marett Taylor will assume a new role as **Chairman, Global AKTG Advisory Board & Trade Relations**, as well as her appointment to the board for **A&K Philanthropy (AKP)**, where she will provide leadership in enhancing AKP's work within all four strategic pillars for AKP's 70+ projects worldwide. Taylor's focus will include women's enterprise, education, and conservation—reflecting values that resonate deeply with the travel advisor community. Taylor will continue to maintain high engagement for AKTG at major trade events, including the upcoming Virtuoso Travel Week, PURE, Signature Travel Network Meetings, and ILTM Cannes.

Strategic Global Advisory Board & Industry Leadership

Taylor's new AKTG strategic role represents AKTG's commitment to advisor-driven innovation from a global perspective. In her new position, Taylor is spearheading the development of AKTG's first multi-brand Global Advisory Board drawing input from key source markets across

the industry, bringing together the top travel agency leaders to shape future product development and trade initiatives for AKTG.

The Global Advisory board will meet with key AKTG leadership multiple times a year to provide strategic guidance on product development, market trends, and trade initiatives. Taylor will continue to report to CEO, Cristina Levis.

"Marett has built exceptional foundations for our global sales teams across both brands," said Levis. "Her new role allows us to leverage her industry expertise and deeply engage our trade partners in guiding our global strategic direction for our entire portfolio."

The inaugural **Global AKTG Advisory Board** will include distinguished travel agency leaders from across the U.S.A., Canada, Latin America, U.K., Europe, and APAC regions with a range of expertise in selling all products within AKTG's luxury portfolio. Appointments are ongoing but new notable appointments from each region include:

- **USA/Canada/Caribbean new members:** Damian McCabe, *McCabe Travel*; Karen Magee, VWT a Chase Travel Company; Katherine Norton, *Brownell*; Cristina Buaas, *CSB Travel*; Aida Silva, *Tully Luxury Travel*; Stephen Smith, *Direct Travel*; Laura Asilis, *Travelwise*. There are additional USA Advisory board members currently serving on the existing A&K advisory board.
- **Latin America/Spain:** Omar Servin, *Amparo*; Mario del Duca, *NUBA*; Marcelo Ortiz, *Traveliz*; Maurice Padovani, *Primetour de Viagens*; Paola Prieto, *NAO*
- **UK:** Edwina Lonsdale, *Mundy Cruising*; Fiona Percy, *The Travel Network Group*; Kirsten Hughes, *Travel Counsellors*; Jacqueline Dobson, *The Vacation Group (Internova)*
- **APAC:** Anthony Goldman, *Goldman Travel Group*; Melinda Gregor, *Gregor & Lewis Bespoke Travel*, Chervin Chow, *Blue Sky Escapes*

Enhanced Brand Focus in Trade Leadership Structure

Both Shawn Johnson and Matias Lira will report directly to **Daniel Krupp, Chief Growth Officer**, who assumes expanded oversight of sales and engagement strategy:

- **Shawn Johnson**, Senior Vice President of Trade Sales, North America, will continue to lead all trade sales and strategy for **Abercrombie & Kent** in the US/Canada market, including for A&K DMC sales and A&K Sanctuary globally.
- **Matias Lira**, Senior Vice President of Trade Sales – Americas, UK & EMEA, will continue directing **Crystal's** trade engagement across international markets outside APAC. He also leads both A&K and Crystal brands for the LATAM market.

"Great advisor relationships are built on trust and results — and Shawn and Matias have earned that trust by truly understanding what advisors need to succeed," said Daniel Krupp. "They bring deep expertise and long-standing industry relationships, and their leadership ensures both continuity and fresh thinking in how we support our partners."

Debra Fox, Executive Vice President will continue to lead Crystal's and A&K's trade sales in APAC and UK and serve as **Managing Director** for Abercrombie & Kent Tour Operating businesses in Australia and the UK. She is supported by **Susan Haberle**, VP of Trade Sales for A&K and Crystal Australia & New Zealand, **Tony Archbold**, VP of Trade Sales for A&K and Crystal Asia, and **Jennifer Charlton**, SVP of Trade Sales UK/EMEA and MD, Cox & Kings.

Growth Momentum

The deepened brand commitment in the leadership structure coincides with unprecedented expansion across AKTG's full portfolio. Crystal continues its successful relaunch with two vessels now operational and robust forward bookings, while securing financing for two additional ships, with the first expected for delivery beginning May 2028. Crystal recently returned to the number one position in *Travel & Leisure's* coveted Reader's Choice rankings for 2025 for mid-size luxury ocean ships—a testament to the successful relaunch. The brand has continued to innovate onboard experiences, welcoming prestigious partners including Casino de Monte-Carlo, Beefbar, and the renowned Michelin-starred Alajmo brothers, reinforcing Crystal's position as a leader in luxury cruising.

Abercrombie & Kent continues its momentum with new DMCs and key new product launches from small group journeys to destinations such as Madagascar and Sri Lanka, alongside new Culinary Journeys, expedition cruises and new itineraries on the A&K private jet. Under its A&K Sanctuary portfolio, the brand continues to expand with multiple openings in 2025, including Gorilla Forest Lodge in Uganda, Pure Amazon riverboat in Peru, and Baines' Lodge in Botswana. The recent brand refresh has been met with exceptional market reception, driving increased advisor engagement and client demand under one unified website, social channels, and brand identity.

Enhanced Trade Support

AKTG is launching an enhanced digital Trade Portal featuring comprehensive marketing assets for both brands, real-time inventory management, and streamlined booking capabilities. The platform will provide advisors with instant access to high-resolution imagery, detailed product specifications, competitive selling tools, and personalized client presentation materials. Additionally, the portal will offer enhanced training modules, webinar scheduling, and direct communication channels with the expanded sales leadership team, ensuring

advisors have immediate access to the resources and support needed to maximize sales opportunities across both brands.

This expansion reinforces AKTG's commitment to delivering transformative luxury experiences across its global portfolio while maintaining its leadership position in expedition and luxury travel.

Travel advisors should direct all trade-related inquiries to:

- Shawn Johnson – Abercrombie & Kent (North America)
- Matias Lira – Crystal and LATAM
- Susan Haberle – A&K and Crystal Australia & New Zealand
- Tony Archbold – A&K and Crystal Asia
- Jennifer Charlton – A&K UK/EMEA

Notes To Editors

High resolution logos and imagery for A&K are available [here](#) and Crystal [here](#).

All media enquiries, please contact:

A&K USA

Janice Yu, PR Director | jyu@abercrombiekent.com

Jean Fawcett, Senior Manager, Media Relations | jfawcett@abercrombiekent.com

Crystal

Robyn Fink, Communications Director | rfink@crystalcruises.com

A&K and Crystal Australasia

Michelle Mickan, VP Marketing | mmickan@abercrombiekent.com.au

A&K EMEA

India Roche, Communications Manager | iroche@abercrombiekent.com

AKTG

James Treacy, Global Communications Director | jtreamy@aktgak.com

AKTG (Abercrombie & Kent Travel Group)

AKTG is a global lifestyle and travel company that sets the standard for refined and personalised travel experiences worldwide. The group encompasses premier travel brands including Abercrombie & Kent, Crystal, Cox & Kings and Ecoventura, alongside strategic investments in other travel companies.

About Abercrombie & Kent

Abercrombie & Kent pioneered luxury adventure travel with our first African safaris in 1962, and today our award-winning travel services extend around the globe to more than one hundred countries on all seven continents. A&K's custom itineraries and small-group journeys offer one-of-a-kind inspiring experiences, while an international network of more than 3,000 staff, in over 65 offices and 40 countries ensure invitation-only access to the people and places that make every destination unique. www.abercrombiekent.com

Join the world of A&K by following us on Instagram: [@abercrombiekent](#), [Facebook](#) and X: [@AKTravel](#)

About Crystal

For more than three decades, Crystal has been synonymous with exceptional, award-winning voyages. In 2022, A&K Travel Group (AKTG) acquired the Crystal brand and its two vessels, Crystal Serenity and Crystal Symphony, ushering in a new era of being Exceptional at Sea. The globally renowned cruise line offers discerning travelers industry-leading, authentic, and enriching experiences both onshore and at sea. Crystal's pioneering partnership with Abercrombie & Kent provides guests with unparalleled access to the most sought-after experiences and destinations around the world. The reimaged ships boast larger, updated suites with artisanal finishes, and almost one member of crew per guest. Crystal is home to the first-ever Casino de Monte-Carlo at sea as part of an exclusive partnership with Monte-Carlo Société des Bains de Mer (SBM), and world-class dining includes Umi Uma®, the only dining experience at sea by Michelin-rated chef Nobu (Nobuyuki Matsuhisa), and the only Beefbar on the ocean, a collaboration with visionary restaurateur Riccardo Giraudi. The ships also feature cutting-edge wellness at the Aurōra Spa, and spectacular entertainment including Broadway-standard shows. With a legacy of unrivaled service and commitment to sophistication and elegance at every touchpoint, once onboard guests feel as if they are perfectly at home.

Join our exceptional community at:

Facebook: [@CrystalCruises](#)

Instagram: [@CrystalCruises](#)

X: [@CrystalCruises](#)

LinkedIn: [@CrystalCruises](#)

