

# HEAD<sup>Q</sup>UARTERS

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## Colophon

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## Time for Top Stories

Nothing can be more enjoyable in the weekend than to hang out in a comfortable chair, pick up a magazine and at long last read the article that you have been patiently waiting for since several months. It happened to me when I was about to leave for Meetings Africa in Joburg. The title of the article was: 'The New Model for Destination Marketing Organizations' and it was based on a recent blogpost from SoolNua Managing Partner, Padraic Gilligan. It has been said that Gilligan is a wise man. He is the author of 'The New Paradigms for Destination Marketing'.

Much has been said and written about destination marketing but to be honest most of it does not go beyond the limited scope of meetings suppliers. Yet, a destination is much more than a convention bureau, a DMC/PCO or a convention centre. In many countries or even cities the bureaus get directly involved in Economic Development and Foreign Direct Investment. By working as a team with these bodies, bidding for international events all of a sudden acquires a bigger-than-life dimension. The Melbourne Convention Bureau is a perfect example of that vision in that they base their approach unmistakably on the DMO model (Destination Marketing Organisation).

For a given destination all organisations should be focused on promoting the destination and work as a single team to bring home the bid. And this should not be limited to conventions and events but equally include attracting new industries or winning new investments. Place Branding and Reputation Management are the current buzzwords to highlight a broader vision and approach, and Padraic's story just makes a lot of sense!

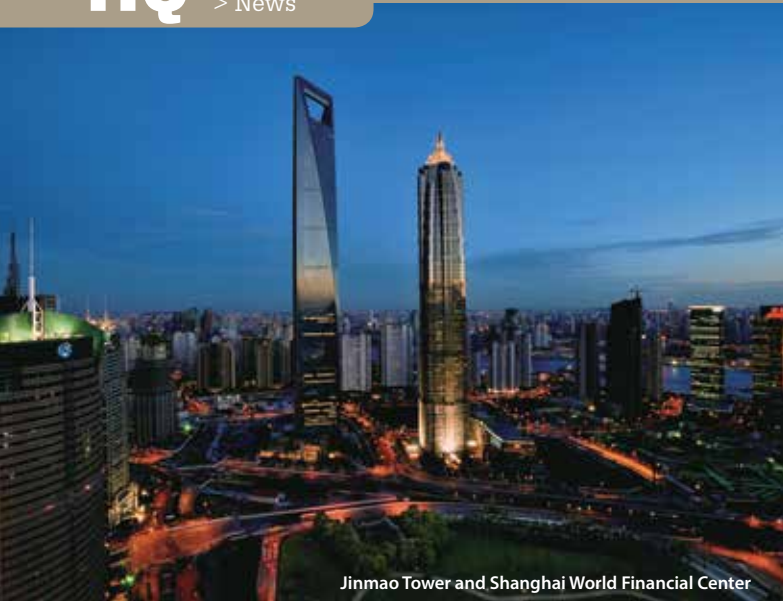
During Meetings Africa James Latham's interview of Gary Grimmer regarding DestinationNEXT also caught my ear. You will be able to read about that as well. Top Stories are definitely my thing, whether to write them or to read them. And now there is ample time to do just that.

» [MORE STORIES ON WWW.MEETINGMEDIAGROUP.COM](http://WWW.MEETINGMEDIAGROUP.COM)

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Jinmao Tower and Shanghai World Financial Center



Melbourne

### CONVENTION EDINBURGH'S UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

A new website has been unveiled by Convention Edinburgh. Carefully created to meet the dual needs of both potential event organisers and future delegates planning a trip to the city, [conventionedinburgh.com](http://conventionedinburgh.com) offers a comprehensive toolkit, practical support and clear, jargon-free guidance to the full - and free - Convention Edinburgh service. The new website is the latest stage in Convention Edinburgh's strategic business development plan and collateral rebranding, which aims to expand its main marketing and sales activity beyond the UK and Europe and increase its focus on North American market. One of the website's objectives is to capture the diversity and quality of Edinburgh's business tourism offering, while remaining accessible and adaptive to the needs of anyone hoping to host a conference in the city.

[www.conventionedinburgh.com](http://www.conventionedinburgh.com)

### CONFERENCE ORGANISERS IN SHANGHAI GET CERTIFIED

The list of Shanghai's first "Conference Organizers in Compliance with Management & Service Standards of the Meetings Industry" was released. Thirteen meetings management and service organisations have passed the evaluation in compliance with applicable standards, and with the approval of Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration, have obtained the "Shanghai Conference Service

Standard Organization" certificate issued by the M.I.C.E. Service Standards Technical Committee of Shanghai Tourism Standards Technical Committee.

[www.meet-in-shanghai.net](http://www.meet-in-shanghai.net)

### CONGREX SWITZERLAND JOINS MARITZ GLOBAL MEETINGS NETWORK

Maritz Travel Company has selected Congrex Switzerland as a partner in the Maritz Global Meetings Network. Congrex Switzerland will serve as meetings experts for Switzerland, offering regional knowledge, capabilities and cultural solutions to Maritz Travel Company's clients. Maritz Travel Company established the Maritz Global Meetings Network as a collaborative approach to enhance its current worldwide capabilities, allowing it to more effectively and efficiently design and deliver exceptional meeting experiences for its clients on a truly global scale in all markets and sectors. As an Association and Conference Expert, Congrex Switzerland is specialised in the organisation of international scientific and medical congresses.

[www.mtc-goglobal.com/GMN](http://www.mtc-goglobal.com/GMN)

### MELBOURNE HOSTS WORLD CANCER CONGRESS

Held at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre (MCEC) with 2,700 delegates from more than 100 countries, the 2014 World Cancer Congress (WCC) was organised by the Geneva-based Union

for International Cancer Control (UICC) and hosted by Cancer Council Australia. Held from 3 to 6 December, it ran concurrently with the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia Conference. The congress was secured by the Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) in 2010, with Club Melbourne Ambassador Professor David Hill AO playing a key role in the bid win. Chief Executive Officer of the UICC, Cary Adams, said at the event's conclusion that the city of Melbourne was the perfect destination for hosting large international congresses like the World Cancer Congress.

[www.australia.com/businessevents](http://www.australia.com/businessevents)

### EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION SUMMIT (EAS) CONFIRMS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Organised in Brussels on 5, 6 and 7 May 2015 by Brussels Convention Bureau, the EAS is the annual education and networking forum for international association executives and senior staff. Now in its third edition, the Summit has launched an open call for presentations, and has received an impressive spontaneous input. As such, it is the first scientific congress that gives a voice to the associations sector. Under the theme "PIONEERS OF CHANGE, New Association Models for the Future", the choice for the cutting-edge topics and the proficiency of the selected speakers are to create a stimulating debate. Isabelle Bardinet, CEO of the European Society of Cardiology, will be the keynote speaker of the 2015 EAS.

[www.easummit.eu](http://www.easummit.eu)

# ARTEXIS-SMG

## A strategic alliance specialized in venue management

To offer highly specialised venue management services in Europe and beyond: this is the confessed aim of Artexis-SMG, a joint venture company recently established by Artexis easyFairs and SMG.

If Artexis easyFairs is well-known in Europe as a fair organiser operating in 15 different countries and managing 8 venues in Belgium and Sweden, SMG, whose headquarters are based in Philadelphia, is lesser known among convention planners in Europe. Eric Everard, CEO of Artexis easyFairs explains: 'SMG is one of the world's leading companies in venue management, with a portfolio of 74 exhibition and convention centres and 120 stadiums. Here in Europe, a lot of public and private owners of congress, convention and exhibition centres are looking to outsource their management. They need specialist expertise to maximise revenue

*streams and to help them host quality events. This is precisely what Artexis-SMG can offer.'*

Joining forces make all the more sense for Artexis easyFairs and SMG indeed. The joint venture combines SMG's proven formula for professional venue management and apply them in the European context. Artexis easyFairs has a deep knowledge of European markets: add to this SMG global processes and best practices, and you have a winning combination. Eric Everard comments: 'We strongly believe in our abilities to energize local economies through our management of venues, and their economic impact on



Eric Everard

*destinations. With creative staff and innovative ambitions, we are content providers and can actually do wonders.'*

Artexis-SMG's scope extends across all of Europe geographically, not just the European Union, and is headquartered in Brussels.

[www.artexis-smg.com](http://www.artexis-smg.com)



## CONVENE 2015

**I repeat it all the time: regional meetings trade fairs are the gauge of an industry. Convene in Lithuania for example is a very good gauge for the Baltic Sea Region, especially for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This year was already the third edition, organised by Vilnius Convention Bureau.**

*By Marcel A.M. Vissers*

Convene is a successful fair because it combines a new-style exhibition space with a lot of local exhibitors from the Baltic Sea Region (the Baltic countries, but also Finland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Poland). Some 160 international hosted buyers attended the fair, undertaking over 3,200 pre-scheduled appointments.

A very positive thing about Convene is that it has a very professional education programme. All sessions are delivered by high-profile speakers from across Europe. Headquarters even did a presentation called 'Associations in a European perspective'. In a recent research study it was mentioned

that there are indeed 95 headquarters of international and regional organisations in the Baltics. Other topics included 'Incentive Ideas and Opportunities in the Baltic Market' and 'Using presentation techniques for sales and marketing', by Luc Chenier, managing director of Titanium. Participants learned key techniques on how to enhance and clearly communicate what they are trying to say and sell without confusing their audience.

A highlight of the fair was the Convene Networking Evening that took place in the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, which lies in the heart of Unesco World Heritage Old Town of Vilnius.

**Next edition: 10-13 February 2016 - [www.convene.lt](http://www.convene.lt)**

# EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

## Interview with Dr. Frank Bosch



Dr. Frank Bosch

The specialty of internal medicine covers a wide range of conditions affecting the internal organs of the body. Although some diseases specifically affect individual organs, the majority of common diseases - arteriosclerosis, diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer may affect many internal organs of the body. Dr. Frank Bosch, President of the European Federation of Internal Medicine, explains how the organisation operates and what challenges it has to overcome.

**HQ: Could you briefly present EFIM?**

*Frank Bosch:* EFIM was founded in 1996 through a merge of AEMI (Association Européenne de Médecine Interne) and the Forum of Presidents to bring together the national societies of internal medicine across Europe.

The purpose of EFIM is to re-emphasise the importance of internal medicine in patient care in a world of increasing specialisation. The Federation was formed because it was felt that internal medicine needed a more powerful voice in Europe both in scientific and political terms. Since its foundation the Federation has been active in many areas.

**HQ: What challenges has the Federation had to overcome in recent years?**

*Frank Bosch:* Historically the focus of the EFIM has been to be the scientific forum for Internal Medicine in Europe. There have been a number of very successful interna-

Working groups have been very active and have produced several articles, mainly in the European Journal of Internal Medicine, which belongs to EFIM. Also successful Schools for Young Internists have been held. A European Curriculum is under construction.

### THE 2016 CONGRESS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE IN EUROPE WILL BE A VERY MODERN CONGRESS ENCOMPASSING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

tional congresses, but also some less successful. The journal is thriving, but is still not accessed by as many internists and the communication with the National Societies has been challenging.

**HQ: What kind of events do you organise?**

*Frank Bosch:* The key areas that EFIM is fully focused on are: EFIM Annual Congress, EJIM – the European Journal of Internal Medicine, ESIM – the European School of Internal



Medicine, EFIM Exchange Programme, EFIM Clinical Research Seminar (together with the Foundation for the Development of Internal Medicine in Europe - FDIME) and EJCRIM – The European Journal of Case Reports in Internal Medicine.

**HQ: We understand you are working on your 2016 and 2017 congresses already. What is the association’s decision process concerning the organisation of your events? How do you decide on destinations and venues?**

*Frank Bosch:* For years our congresses were organised in partnership with the national society who bid to host the congress. This structure appeared to be somewhat vulnerable for EFIM finances, if, for instance, the national society didn’t get enough sponsorship and had to cancel the congress. Therefore the Executive committee made a decision to create a high-quality scientific congress for Internal Medicine in Europe. We looked at different possibilities and estimated the capacity and the involvement of the active national societies. Based on all the estimation and the results of previous joint events held, we decided to have 2016 congress organised in Amsterdam and 2017 congress organised in Barcelona.

We are in progress of selecting the PCO who is going to support us in making this event successful.

**HQ: As an organisation, how sustainable are you?**

*Frank Bosch:* EFIM as federation puts a lot of efforts on the responsible management of resource use. We are a paperfree organisation. Since EFIM does exist since 1996 and activities are steadily growing (for instance exchange program, FDIME bursaries for research periods in another country, construction of the European curriculum), the sustainability seems rather firm. Events mentioned earlier do attract sufficient interest to continue.

**HQ: How do you see the future of the association?**

*Frank Bosch:* We’ve been very busy trying to strengthen the position of Internal Medicine in Europe by working together more closely with many disciplines in Internal Medicine and beyond. EFIM is in process of building EU curriculum for internists. EFIM’s role is to represent its members at EU level, and keep them informed on EU matters that could affect them. Furthermore, we are involved in strengthening the role of the medical professional in a broader sense. Cooperation with the American College of Physicians (ACP) is fruitful and growing.

**HQ: How would you summarise new trends in the association congress world?**

*Frank Bosch:* The 2016 congress of Internal Medicine in Europe will be a very modern congress encompassing advanced technology. We will use social media, video streaming to different locations in Europe, discussion forums, etc. In our vision a congress should be able to let the attending doctors participate in an active environment. Through these innovative opportunities we hope to bring internists from around the world under one roof.

[www.efim.org](http://www.efim.org)

**EFIM PAST & FUTURE CONGRESSES**

- 2008 – Rome, Italy (approx. 800 delegates)
- 2009 – Istanbul, Turkey (1,250 delegates)
- 2010 – High level scientific event – Luzern, Switzerland
- 2011 – Athens, Greece (approx. 1,100 delegates)
- 2012 – Madrid, Spain (approx. 2,000)
- 2013 – Prague, Czech Republic (1,540 delegates)
- 2014 – Geneva, Switzerland (3026 delegates)
- 2015 (14 -16 October) – Moscow, Russian Federation
- 2016 (September) – Amsterdam, The Netherlands



# COMPLIANCE

## A militant viewpoint

**Often, speaking at industry meetings, I'm asked to indicate the trends impacting on healthcare meetings. The reply always mentions compliance, firstly. However, the concept of compliance needs to be defined: many initiatives, coming from different players, are today grouped behind the same concept, with very different scopes and impacts.**

*Text Alessandro Cortese, President of ESAE & CEO of the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO)*



Alessandro Cortese

In general, it is possible to indicate two major trends, both trying to address the problem of installing higher transparency in the marketing behaviors for medical products and devices.

On one side, there is a legislative effort, taking place both in Europe and in North America defining a series of texts that impose new commercial behaviors to HC companies when promoting their products. On the other side, the same HC companies, mainly in Europe, define codes of conducts and ethical codes via their trade organizations, EFPIA for the Pharma world, Eucomed and COCIR for the medical devices industries.

Both areas of initiatives witness and acknowledge the fact that the way medical products were marketed in the past was problematic.

The image of a doctor and his or her family being flown business class to a seaside resort for a few hours of 'education' on a single and specific product is probably

excessive. However, some practices in the past might have not been very different.

That type of behaviors implied several important ethical questions. How could a doctor obtain balanced and equal information on all the available treatments, with an objective assessment of the pros and cons of each? How could patients have

### THE CURRENT REGULATORY LANDSCAPE REALLY CALLS FOR ACTION AND IT IS TIME FOR ASSOCIATIONS TO DEFINE A STANDARD OF PRACTICE AND PROMOTE IT TO ALL THEIR STAKEHOLDERS

a reasonable guarantee to receive the best possible and available treatment? Were doctors becoming liable to companies to make a certain level of prescription of a specific product in order to maintain their benefits?

From a patient centric perspective, it is clear that certain excesses were not acceptable. In the US several legislative texts saw the light in the last years, trying

to regulate the financial flows from companies to HC practitioners and make those as transparent as possible. The most important is probably the *Sunshine Act* inserted in the *Patient Protection Affordable Care Act*, effective from 2013, obliging all HC companies to declare any financial transaction and gift to a practitioner starting from 10\$.

In Europe, the Directive 2004/109/EC tries to install a common ground across the member states for transparency and commercial behaviors, originally on financial products, but with principles applicable to other categories.

In general, a Directive allows up to ten years for the member states to receive the legislative principle in national law.



However the interpretation of the Directive allows each state to read the principle with a degree of liberty. As a consequence this Directive from 2004 had to be received by all the EU member States by 2014, explaining why a legislative text from 2004 has an impact now, and the national laws really vary in interpretation.

The result, for HC meetings is a very diverse panorama of countries and destinations, some having a very rigid approach, some having a more flexible approach, when it comes to transparency on commercial behaviors. In the case of the most rigid interpretations, medical meetings are obliged to segment their audiences by professional category, ensuring that only the appropriate commercial communication reaches the targeted audience.

To be more concrete, this implies, for HC meetings, that drugs can only be promoted to prescribers and not to other professionals and stakeholders (nurses, researchers, patients, etc.). In practice, this would mean that the access to the exhibition area should be restricted only to the professional categories, allowed to receive the communication about products.

There are several implications. This article is not the appropriate place to discuss whether patients, for instance, should have the right to receive full information on available treatments (personally, I would strongly argue in favor). However, the consequences on HC meetings are heavy. As a result of this situation, some destinations are becoming problematic and solutions are to be found. On the contrary, some other destinations, less rigid, have a strong competitive advantage when attracting medical congresses.

Alongside to the legislative efforts, there is another group of initiatives to be considered, when talking about

compliance. I refer to the codes of conduct and recommendations adopted by the pharma industry (via EFPIA) and the medical devices industry (via Eucomed and COCIR).

These are voluntary codes adopted by the member companies, agreeing on some common commercial behaviors and conducts, aiming at a higher level of ethics and transparency. These codes determine very concrete and practical aspects that companies should look at, when deciding to sponsor or exhibit at HC meetings.

In the case of EFPIA, meetings are screened and assessed based on the information provided regarding the commercial implications on a scientific program, the destination, the level of accommodation, and the social components of the meeting. Based on all the above, the meetings receive an evaluation and companies are recommended to sponsor and exhibit, or not, a determined meeting. While different in some of the aspects assessed, a similar mechanism is also set up by Eucomed for the medical device industry.

These assessment programs are starting to also impact the way HC meetings are organized. Here again, there are consequences on the way some destinations, considered as places for leisure and tourism, receive negative evaluations. Also, societies now have to consider the type of social initiatives, limiting the expenditures in a destination for the networking part of meetings (which remains a fundamental benefit for a congress attendee).

Similarly to the questions raised by the legislative developments, also the developments of these assessment programs come with important ethical questions. This article



is probably not the appropriate place to discuss if these programs are really improving the ethical image of the medical industries, in particular of the pharmaceutical one, and if the ethical effort should only correspond to the way companies evaluate their commercial participation to medical congresses, trying to impact from a marketing perspective on the models of dissemination of science and research.

However, in this complex environment, something strikes by its absence. Associations have failed, so far, to define their own code of conduct and set of principles for organising medical congresses. Some fundamental areas still today remain without clear rules.

How can societies determine which companies have an ethical behavior?

How can societies make sure that sponsoring and exhibiting behaviors do not impact on the scientific exchange at congresses, thus guaranteeing that all medical professionals receive the best possible medical education, in the interest of their patients?

How can meetings still offer professional networking and social opportunities to their attendees, without risking to be considered tour operators by the ones who, in some cases, behaved as tour operators until few years ago?

The current regulatory landscape really calls for action and it is time for associations to define a standard of practice and promote it to all their stakeholders.

# ESAE AND COMPLIANCE

## A not so Unusual Bond

The last ESAE peer2peer session of 2014 took place in Brussels last December. Its topic: compliance in the medial association sector. The subject is increasingly important as all, associations, their partners as well as destinations appear to suffer from increasing legal obligations and restrictions.

*Text Christoph Raudonat*

The session had invited as experts Michel Ballieu, CEO of the European CanCER Organisation (ECCO) and Christine Sainvil, Compliance Officer at Eucomed to share their insights and experiences with this challenging topic. Benita Lipps, Director of the DaVinci Institute in Brussels was the facilitator and ESAE representative of the overall session.

The ESAE would like to express also its gratitude to its Premier Partner in Education: Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong, a division of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, represented at this event by Helen Chan.

### CHALLENGING TOPIC

As the peer2peer discussion proved, the topic of compliance is challenging to say the least and there appears to be a need for further coordination of approaches both on the side of the legal enforcement of the compliance directive at national and international level, as well as on the side of the development of internal compliance and ethics codes.

This puts further pressures and increased demand on congress organisers as the rules and regulations are neither clear and streamlined in their approach, nor implemented in the same

way. Among the participants appeared to be consensus that there is a clear gap between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law, the intended outcome.

What we currently see is a landscape of three major European compliance councils in addition to the EU Directive, which is implemented differently into national and local jurisdictions. This has led to a sentiment among affected associations that the implementation approach has been less than optimal as it would appear that they have not been sufficiently involved into this



Christoph Raudonat

discussion, which does raise the point of the validity and representative power a modern association has in the eyes of the regulator.

From the point of view of the associations in question, the feeling was strong that there is in particular a lack of definition of various terms that are crucial to the accurate following of the regulations. Definitions that would greatly assist a smooth planning of conferences and congresses.

As one example showed, the definition of 'laymen' and 'who' should need to be protected through the implementation compliance regulations was felt to be misleading as depending on the occasion one definition would – in an interdisciplinary environment – have to be reassessed and re-examined as its applicability might not be warranted anymore in a clear and straight-forward manner from field to field.



## AFFECTING COMPLIANCE

At the same time, issues of compliance affect venues and destinations of large congresses just as much and it would appear that reputation and branding of

increased stress on suppliers across the board.

Overall, from the association standpoint, there is of course willingness to adhere

professional associations. The question is: can associations establish themselves sufficiently well as counterparts in this discussion and, if yes, how should they go about it?

The discussion around the streamlining of legislation and how to comply in the least intrusive manner is far from over and we expect to hear more in the near future.

To learn more about Compliance and best practices within the context of non-profit management, feel free to contact the ESAE for more information.

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## **FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE ASSOCIATIONS IN QUESTION, THE FEELING WAS STRONG THAT THERE IS IN PARTICULAR A LACK OF DEFINITION OF VARIOUS TERMS THAT ARE CRUCIAL TO THE ACCURATE FOLLOWING OF THE REGULATIONS**

certain destinations are currently causing great damage to venues in their fight to secure continued income sources. The need for these destinations and host venues to reassess their comparative advantage and approach to the market is paramount a great source of concern as current assessments appear to include a notion of how such venues are perceived, which puts

to the new rules and regulations and many associations have established ethical guidelines and compliance codes to prove that they fall within the established legislative framework. However, there is a clear need for further streamlining of approaches and a balancing of the discussion to take into account the experiences and needs of



# COMPLIANCE IN THE MEDICAL AND PHARMACEUTICAL SECTORS

**Compliance - a word that makes professionals in the world of medical meetings cringe these days. The relationship between medical associations and pharmaceutical companies has never been more complicated.**

For quite some time, it seemed that it was easier for an association or a congress with the right following to get money out of companies than it was to steal candy from a kid. In many cases these relationships were uneven and the associations clearly in a position of power - just like many of their members themselves. First class tickets, boutique meetings in resort destinations and lavish hospitality were the tip of the iceberg and unfortunately a much better headline than the millions of dollars that went towards education, research and development.

To illustrate the point a bit better - the relationship should be seen as a pendulum and for a long time it swung further and further into one direction, until it basically catapulted itself onto the other side - a result of tighter scrutiny, bad press and billions of dollars in fines. And this is where we find ourselves now: the other side of that pendulum.

## WHAT TO DO

So what to do now? Many still believe that sooner or later the pendulum will swing back - not all the way where it used to be but basically manifest itself somewhere in the middle. This might be right and if we look back at the year 2015 in a decade, we might find ourselves wondering what all the panic was about. But, hoping for better days to come can't be the way to deal with the problem at hand.

First of all, compliance in the medical and pharmaceutical sectors is complex; there is no easy solution or answer, in fact there isn't only **one answer**. The truth is that there are so many answers to questions of "how"

and "what" when it comes to the funding of medical congresses, that each case needs to be examined on its own.

Firstly, pharmaceutical compliance is primarily self-imposed by companies to regulate the market before the lawmakers were able to. As almost all companies were faced with the same challenge but actually came up with very different solutions, their representing bodies - like EFPIA - have tried to formulate an industry code. That itself is fantastic but in general not more than a guideline on compliance as the specific compliance guidelines can vary immensely among different EFPIA member companies.

## THE ISSUE OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES COMES INTO PLAY. WHAT WORKS WELL IN NORTH AMERICA MIGHT NOT WORK AT ALL IN ASIA

In addition, the issue of cultural differences comes into play. What works well in North America might not work at all in Asia. Anybody working for or with an international association knows that compliance means something very different depending on what country/culture is concerned. Take the example of inviting physicians to attend an international medical conference; while North American doctors are already quite used to not having their way paid by a pharmaceutical company, the Latin American or Asian doctor still counts on the support of a company to be able to attend. In fact, many of them rely on that support as wages in many of these countries are a fraction of what they are in North America or Europe, and universities and institutions have much less money to spend on sending doctors half way around the world to a conference.

We have grown accustomed to these differences - we have adapted to it. However, we seem to have a much harder time understanding the differences in how compliance issues are handled in different companies. The key to gaining some understanding in this area is constant dialogue. With one of our clients, we have started annual meetings with approximately 20 of their top sponsors. Each meeting is only 30 minutes long but includes a full update on their compliance guidelines and general feedback on our sponsorship prospectus. We found this to be extremely eye-opening as we could see significant changes in terms of compliance and its application within the same company from year to year, but also extremely helpful as we were able to address these changes early on. By keeping the lines of communication open, we were able to change our sponsorship offering

along the way and to existing sponsorship contracts if a company's guidelines changed. It is incredibly important to understand that when it comes to compliance in sponsorship and marketing, our sales reps at the companies sit in the same boat as us; we all wish it was easier but we have to make the best out of the hand we are dealt with.

## NEW REGULATIONS

As if self-imposed regulation wasn't enough, governments have imposed a string of new regulations when it comes to the funding of physician's activities. One of the most significant changes was the "Physicians' Sunshine Act" which was first passed in the United States but has quickly found copycats within the European Union. The "Sunshine Act" as it is commonly called is supposed to shed a light (hence the term "sunshine") on what

physicians receive as gifts and payments from pharmaceutical companies. Its purpose is to protect patients' interest by assuring that physicians act in their best interest rather than on behalf of a pharmaceutical company that has paid them. In general, nobody will disagree with that, however, the detail to which the Sunshine Act goes and the practical implementation make it increasingly more difficult to obtain funding for educational activities such as medical conferences. It makes the sponsorship of physicians' attendance at these conferences practically impossible (unless from certain countries with no such act in place), it makes it harder to identify areas of sponsorship and it basically prohibits any social activity within the conference program.

These changes make it increasingly difficult for associations to create an attractive and balanced program that not only delivers on education and science but also allows for attendees to network and share experiences. There is no way around these regulations - as meeting planners and association executives, all we can do is educate ourselves for every conference we hold again. Regulations differ from country to country, company to company (as well as company location) and year to year. It is up to us to keep the lines of communication open and active with our key sponsors in

order to get the best possible benefit for our conference and delegates - which in turn will create the best benefit for our sponsors.

When asked about the biggest change that I have encountered in the last few years when it comes to the participation of pharmaceutical companies in medical meetings, it is a shift to marketing that is based on delivering scientific value. Instead of sponsoring items like conference bags or even food and beverage events, pharmaceutical sponsors now prefer items that are educational or scientific such as a virtual meeting, an educational booklet or a satellite symposia. At recent conferences, there has been giveaways at Exhibit booths again - but this time they weren't little gadgets like universal chargers or water bottles, now those are branded mini staging books or disease reference cards for doctors.

### NOT ALL BAD

Not all changes that have come our way in the last few years are bad. Bringing some transparency and focus on education and science back to medical meetings is actually a good thing. However, it remains desirable that the attitude towards the funding of physicians to attend meetings as well as the general rejection of everything that includes a social element changes. Networking is important - anybody who has attended a

meeting in their field will admit that many of the best takeaways come from the dinner conversations we had with likeminded people from our area of expertise - and the value of that hopefully will be discovered again.

Until then, the key to success when seeking pharmaceutical partnership for an association's activities is: EDUCATE - educate yourself and your team about the latest changes in compliance regulations. COMMUNICATE - keep an open line of communication with your sponsors and corporate partners, and INNOVATE - be ready to change your approach to comply with all regulations and fit the needs of your stakeholders.

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This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author Mathias Posch, Council Member of IAPCO, and President of ICS, International Conference Services, Vancouver, Canada. IAPCO represents today 120 professional organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries. [info@iapco.org](mailto:info@iapco.org) / [www.iapco.org](http://www.iapco.org)



# TRANSPARENCY TAKES HOLD

The first wave of US HCP payment data was released on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 under CMS' Open Payments System (widely known as Sunshine Act). The objective was to help consumers understand the financial relationships between the healthcare industry, doctors and teaching hospitals. The data lists consulting fees, research grants, travel reimbursements, and other gifts provided by industry to healthcare professionals (HCPs) and healthcare organisations (HCOs).

*Text Simon Dufaur, Global Director - Healthcare & Life Sciences, Europe, MCI Brussels*



Covering just the first five months of 2013, the numbers are huge: the Open Payments system contains 4.45 million payments valued at nearly \$3.7bn to 546,000 physicians and nearly 1,360 teaching hospitals. The second year of data submissions is currently underway with publishing of 2014 data (plus any applicable updates to the 2013 data) slated for June 2015.

## CRITICAL RELATIONS

Relations between industry and clinicians are critical for improving patient care and clinical outcomes. It is commonplace in the industry to gather key opinion leaders to help industry understand the market and their business. Historically, these relationships between industry and physicians have been widespread. A 2007 study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NJEM)<sup>i</sup> revealed that 94% of US doctors surveyed had a relationship with industry; of those, 60% were involved in medical education and 40% in creating clinical practice guidelines.

Numerous studies have shown that payments are persuasive, no matter their size or form. For some watchdogs, the fact that there is a relationship is the determining factor and not the size of the transfer of value. However it was the ethical nature of these relationships that has been questioned, with a glut of news stories reporting on the trend to offer overtly lavish trips for doctors in the hope that this would increase prescription rates. Whilst those numbers

published in NJEM above are now estimated to have dropped, the reputational legacy lives on. The Times of India ran an article recently commenting on plans to ban industry from "doling out freebies, cruise tickets, paid vacations and sponsorships to educational conferences and seminars"<sup>ii</sup>. The US Open Payments system and the European EFPIA Disclosure Code have been created as a direct response to concerns that financial ties may unduly influence medical practice and research.

## INACCURATE AND INCOMPLETE?

The Open Payments data has already come under criticism as some medical societies claim the data to be inaccurate and incomplete. This follows some significant technical issues in the Open Payments database during the data upload and review phase. As such, many HCPs believe there was an inadequate opportunity to review their individual data, with many medical associations questioning the accuracy of the published information.

## WHAT MUST BE REPORTED UNDER THE SUNSHINE ACT

- The name and address of the HCP
- The amount and date of the payment (if more than \$10)
- The form of such payment (e.g. cash, stock)
- The nature of the payment (e.g. entertainment, gifts, consulting fees)

A recent article in the New York Times,<sup>iii</sup> reported on numerous problems in obtaining accurate tallies of all payments associated with each drug and device, with widespread misspelling in the submitted data, particularly over drug names, detracting from the usefulness of the published data.

Featuring around 2.6 million lines of identifiable general payments (of which, more than 1.7 million "transfers of value" were for less than \$20), the Open Payments system has been criticised for making proper analysis difficult and not delivering the transparency it was intended to do. The time and resources required to filter through the data volume and complexity means that it is unlikely that the general public will get a true sense of the payments. Instead, it is seemingly far more probable that the public will rely on press articles for insights.

It has been interesting to see the range of media coverage that has surrounded the data release. Early press articles focused on the delays and technical challenges behind the roll-out of the Open Payments system. Media coverage since then has been surprisingly light with the majority of articles covering the issue from one of three standpoints:

- The potential thawing of collaboration between doctors and industry
- An objective analysis of the data
- A highlight of the biggest recipient doctors and hospitals



## WHAT ABOUT EUROPE?

Whereas the Open Payments system is an integral part of the US Affordable Care Act, most of the 34 countries in Europe affected by the EFPIA Disclosure Code are using persuasion, rather than legislation, to encourage disclosure. In fact, this will not be the first time that payments have been made public in Europe. A considerable amount of data is already in the public domain at the national

benefits to patients and less over the intricacies of disclosure. Medical associations, industry and regulators across Europe, therefore, need to develop the right com-

## NON-DISCLOSURE IS A MAJOR RISK TO THE CREDIBILITY OF THE INDUSTRY. MOST EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS WISH TO BE SEEN TO BE WELCOMING THE TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

level and several countries, including the Netherlands and France, already require public reporting of financial relationships. Experience from the Netherlands (where there is an annual cumulative threshold of €500 and no requirement to report individual transactions) has shown that the public are not interested in the amounts but if there is a relationship or not.

There is an inherent tension in Europe between transparency and privacy, with data and personal privacy becoming a key concern. With the exception of those few European countries where there is formal legislation requiring disclosure, the HCP has the right give or withhold consent over publication. Consent typically follows an explanation of the information to be disclosed and who will see it, and may be revocable at any time.

Non-disclosure is a major risk to the credibility of the industry. Most European associations wish to be seen to be welcoming the transparency initiative. Though, as MCI's 2014 thought leadership paper highlighted<sup>iv</sup>, the various stakeholders still need to learn to collaborate over promoting the

munications and information that will convince the concerned parties. HCPs should be convinced to participate and not to opt-out through non-disclosure, whilst the media should be convinced to consider the data carefully before passing judgment about physicians' and teaching hospitals' relationships with industry.

### GREATER TRANSPARENCY

Transparency has become a very important professional value over the past 15 years, mirroring a progressive societal shift to greater transparency. There is a diminishing group of doctors, who are used to not disclosing anything; that said, one has to accept that not every doctor will accept it. Medical associations should focus on the significant majority who do and advise their members to prepare for inquiries from the media, colleagues and patients in advance of the EFPIA data release.

For industry, their credibility will be upheld through their interpreting the rules correctly and not skirting around them. After all, the skill in healthcare compliance is navigating the grey zone. It is unclear yet whether EFPIA will, like CMS, have audit

authority over the submitted data but elect to not use it. The key test for EFPIA will be to get the same level of data consistency and to convey that transparency should not be viewed as a comment about the issue of the past but rather as paving the way for the next generation. The very publication of EFPIA disclosure data will inevitably draw more attention to the relationship between HCPs and industry. Compensation of doctors is normal and reasonable as long as the relation is fit for purpose and the amount is correct for the work done. The expectation is that transparent business relationships, free from corruption and unethical ties, will ensure that treatment and prescribing decisions are made in the best interest of the patient.

It is easy to get caught up in the technicalities and evolution of transparency codes, and one can easily lose sight of the patient. Just remember that even though it's being declared online, patients don't feel directly any better!

[www.mci-group.com](http://www.mci-group.com)

A seasoned healthcare executive, Simon directs MCI's healthcare team in assisting medical associations and pharmaceutical companies manage increasingly complex regulatory changes and build high-level stakeholder alliances through strategic consulting and service development.

- i <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa064508>
- ii <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/From-Jan-1-pharma-cos-can-no-longer-gift-freebies-to-doctors/article-show/45610957.cms>
- iii The New York Times, 22 Jan 2015, "Data on payments from drugmakers to doctors is marred by error", Charles Ornstein, Ryann Grochowski Jones and Mike Tigas
- iv [http://mci-group.com/~media/Files/Publications/MCI\\_Successful\\_Medical\\_Leaders\\_WP.ashx](http://mci-group.com/~media/Files/Publications/MCI_Successful_Medical_Leaders_WP.ashx)

# UIA ASSOCIATIONS ROUND TABLES

## What they can offer

The diversity of international associations attending any given UIA Round Table is dizzying, yet each Round Table confirms that we have more in common than our associations' names might indicate. We share challenges and questions and concerns - changing membership, limited resources, complicated legal requirements, to mention just a few - and, when given the chance, we share answers too.

*Text Nancy Carfrae, Coordinator, UIA Associations Round Table*



The UIA Round Tables bring together people who are involved in running associations, have some of them tell about their experience with particular challenges, and give structured time for all of them to exchange concerns and knowledge. We consider a Round Table a success if the participants go home with new ideas, with renewed motivation, and with names of people with whom they want to stay in touch.

We have considerable experience doing this. For over 100 years the UIA has been working to promote and facilitate the work of international associations. Since 2007 the UIA Associations Round Tables are our platform to give a wide range of associations an opportunity to learn through networking and through practice. International associations - professional societies, service organisations, interest groups, charities, and all other types, active in all fields of human endeavour - send

representatives to the UIA Round Tables to meet other international association representatives, to share experience and knowledge, and to gain practical skills and tools. In 2015 the 9<sup>th</sup> Round Table Europe expects to welcome 200 participants for a full day event, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round Table Asia-Pacific looks forward to over 100 participants.

Highlights from the 2014 Round Tables include the keynote by Cyril Ritchie, President of CoNGO - the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, putting the role of associations worldwide in perspective. He underlined the influence and impact associations have in initiating and executing major international projects, and reminded us of the essential humanitarian values animating our work. There were stories from association representatives of challenges faced and - sometimes - overcome.

There was the passionate and motivating message from Jack Sim, Founder of the World Toilet Organization. 'Remember your mission,' he advised us. 'If you spend all your time looking for funds then what you are doing is looking for funds, not fulfilling your mission.' And throughout there were group discussions and conversations on the vision, challenges and future of our own associations, and on the strategies and solutions we employ.

### WHAT MAKES THE UIA ASSOCIATIONS ROUND TABLES DIFFERENT

First of all, they are organised by the UIA, with its century of experience. The UIA is a research institute and documentation centre. Non-profit, apolitical, independent, and non-governmental in nature, the UIA has been a pioneer in the research, monitoring and provision of information on international associations and their global challenges since its founding in 1907.





The UIA Round Tables are by and for associations. They are not business events to which associations are invited. It is perhaps the only event ALL associations can attend, no strings attached. This means the participants come from all over, and from incredibly diverse associations. And, with all our diversity, we have so much in common: questions of management and administration, policies and regulations, values and vision and pragmatism.

and have profited from, "hosted buyer" programmes.)

To make it easier for all associations to attend, including those with fewer resources, the registration fee for associations is kept deliberately low (45€ for Round Table Europe 2015), thanks to the support of our sponsors. In the same spirit, we move the Round Tables each year. The participant numbers are also deliberately kept

**PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

The UIA Associations Round Table Europe started in 2007, followed by Asia-Pacific in 2013, and now we are exploring opportunities to take it to other parts of the world. We know that many associations do not have the resources - time, staff, money - to travel to distant places. We would like to hold Round Tables around the world so that all associations have the opportunity to attend a UIA Round Table locally.

**WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACED BY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TODAY?**

Rightly or wrongly, money is almost always cited as the number one problem. How do we associations ensure we have the financial resources to carry out our work today and to plan for the future?

Communication is also high on the list. Seldom does one meet an association that does not know why it is doing what it is doing, but somehow many of us are unable to get the message across clearly to the people we want to hear it, whether members, funders, the public, or, indeed, sometimes our own Boards. Choosing the right medium and the right moment seem often to be great stumbling blocks.

**[roundtable.uia.org](http://roundtable.uia.org)**

Nancy Carfrae has worked for the UIA since 1984. Her current responsibilities, in addition to the Round Tables, are varied, and included supervising the maintenance of UIA's associations and meetings databases and the compilation of the annual International Meetings Statistics Report.

**THE UIA ROUND TABLES ARE BY AND FOR ASSOCIATIONS. THEY ARE NOT BUSINESS EVENTS TO WHICH ASSOCIATIONS ARE INVITED. IT IS PERHAPS THE ONLY EVENT ALL ASSOCIATIONS CAN ATTEND, NO STRINGS ATTACHED**

The Round Tables bring together people you won't meet anywhere else. As the UIA's main work is documenting international association activity, it can draw on its own unparalleled database when inviting associations to its Round Tables. The starting point is over 36,000 currently active international associations, of all shapes and sizes. Many of them will never be found on any other list: finding them is, after all, the UIA's expertise. And many of them will never be seen at any other association event or trade fair. They often don't even get invited: their meetings are not frequent or regular enough; they are largely volunteer run; they have, simply, never come to the attention of the organisers of such events. (The recent UIA Survey on International Meeting Issues shows that only 7.3% of the international associations surveyed are familiar with,

low in order to ensure a truly interactive programme and facilitate networking and sharing.

**UIA'S RECENT ROUND TABLES**

In 2014 the Round Table Asia-Pacific, held in October in Seoul, brought together 93 people, including 58 association representatives, from 13 countries. The Round Table Europe, held in November in Dublin, was at maximum capacity with 119 people, including 89 association representatives, from 19 countries. The other participants represent various services with a keen interest in listening to and learning from associations, such as national or city tourist authorities.



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Australia is on everyone's list to visit, and it lured our highest number of delegates yet. There's no doubt they'll be talking about this convention for years to come.

**Dr Louise Wong,**  
International Board Member

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Gary Khan



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# GARY KHAN

## India with a vision

Jalil Khan, known mostly as Gary, hails from Hyderabad, but has lived most of his life away. Having spent 23 years working for United Airlines in the USA, he is now the CEO of Hyderabad Convention Visitors Bureau, the only organisation of this kind in India, as Gary likes to remind us. A man of wisdom and frankness, he shares here his insights about India as a convention destination, but also explains why, according to him, Hyderabad is a few steps ahead of its India counterparts.

*Interview Cécile Caiati-Koch & Rémi Dévé*

**HQ: With a brand-new Prime Minister in office, it seems the country as a whole is going to a brand-new direction. Can you elaborate on this?**

*Gary Khan:* The 15<sup>th</sup> and current Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi is in office since May 2014. He conjures up visceral reactions across India. Mr. Modi felt - in fact we've all felt - India needed a change and he has a clear, ambitious vision for our country. He has infused confidence with the people of India, gathered the nation as a whole, as well as the US with which India has important trade relations.

His ideologies underline the growth of the nation as a whole, borne out of cultural and

ethical values imbibed within all Indians. As the Incredible India campaign stresses on its motto - "*Athithi devo bhava*" which translates to "*Guest is God*" - it has been personified in his works since he became the Prime Minister. India, with its audacious workforce that is as good as any other nation, has its roots deep engrained in its cultures and traditions. It is this juxtaposition, Mr. Modi beckons, that makes India so unique in the global arena!

Mr. Modi recognises people's talent and wants to promote it, along with Indian traditions. The new India will expand trade and manufacture to the world and simultaneously promote tourism and technology. He wants to make India the IT country *par*

*excellence*, and diversify from the agricultural industry. It all sounds like he has grand plans for India. He has resolved, for example, to make it easy for people to get visas to come and visit or organise conferences. He's understood the significance of MICE business as being important and made it one of our first priorities because it is high yield tourism per head: he has given clear instructions for business tourism to become a well-defined target market.

**HQ: Will you play a role 'educating' him and making him understand what the meetings industry is really about?**

*Gary Khan:* As you know, Hyderabad is the only city with a Convention Bureau, so yes, I've been asked many times by industry colleagues to share my expertise. I'm eager to tell Mr. Modi how the meetings industry can impact India as a country, how its grandiloquence can boost the economy as a whole, what a meeting organiser looks for in a destination and what a delegate is after when he comes to a conference.



Golkonda

Then, of course, I'm going to ask him for money! There has to be government support and funding for the Indian meetings industry to grow. India is a rich country, in the sense of its huge IT market, export industry, IT products and services, its large manufacturing segment and even medical tourism sectors. As it is, actually all fields that impact our economy are encouraged - in addition to the promotion of ethical values, discipline, and even cleanliness!

It's the whole increase of the GDP that is at stake and we should all be on the same page about this. Having said that, the MICE industry is inter-reliant with the tourism sector and India epitomizes its endorsement through its identity of being a world renowned unique destination. Educating about the meetings industry collates all these aspects.

**HQ: We hear the outbound meetings market is booming in India. But what about the inbound market? Who is coming to do events in India?**

*Gary Khan:* An assortment of people really, but mainly from Europe and the United States. A large number of foreign companies

- in the IT, pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors - have offices in India, they see the country as an exotic destination, and they promote it to their headquarters back home. A good example is the mission of the Hyderabad Convention Visitors Bureau

diseases and the meeting will be held in India for the first time, bringing about 3,000 delegates to Hyderabad. I personally took the organisers to meet with all the top brass in the government and only then were they completely convinced that we had a true

**I WILL DARE SAY HYDERABAD IS TWO OR THREE STEPS AHEAD OF THE REST OF THE COUNTRY WHEN IT COMES TO MEETINGS, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE WAY ALL PARTIES - STATE GOVERNMENT, SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD, AND THE BUREAU ITSELF - WORK TOGETHER**

(HCVB), that actively goes out to the world via trade and road shows, taking Hyderabad to the world and bringing the world to Hyderabad. We also have a distinct advantage since India is an English-speaking country and the world's largest democracy.

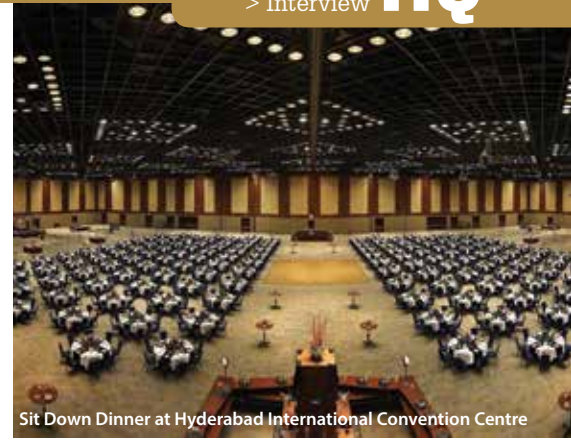
But I'll give you one example that says it all. We recently won the bid to host the 2016 International Congress of Infectious Diseases. The Boston-based International Society for Infectious Diseases has always had a particular focus on the global burden of infectious

coalition of power houses to impressively host their prestigious congress. India, and particularly Hyderabad, was already ready for them! That's what made a difference.

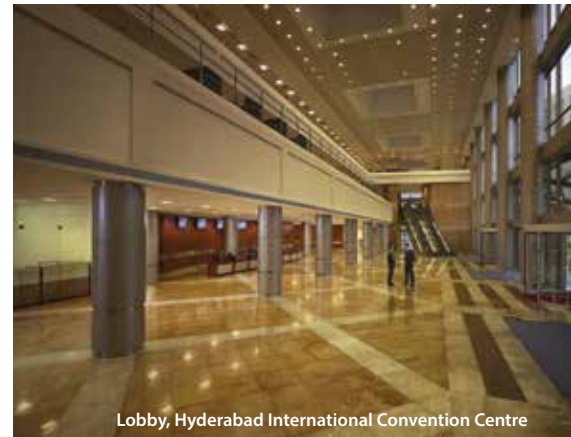
Everybody wants to make India a success story in the meetings industry. For this, we attribute to the strong support from the authorities and also from very powerful local associations and institutions filled with nationalistic pride and zeal to promote any congress that is marked to come to Hyderabad. The same approach to win the



Hyderabad International Convention Centre , Theatre Style



Sit Down Dinner at Hyderabad International Convention Centre



Lobby, Hyderabad International Convention Centre

World Neuro Rehabilitation Congress 2018 was applied and again, we were successful. The Hyderabad victory announcement was made in Istanbul Turkey, late last year.

**HQ: Back to Hyderabad. As the CEO of the Convention Bureau, can you tell us about how the city has evolved?**

*Gary Khan:* I will dare say Hyderabad is two or three steps ahead of the rest of the country when it comes to meetings, primarily because of the way all parties - state government, specialists in the field, and the Bureau itself - work together. Hyderabad has also the necessary infrastructure: there are hotels galore to suit all levels of budgets, all geared up for meetings. There are, for example, the Novotel with its integral Conference Centre the only true one in the country, the Hyderabad Marriott Hotel & Convention Centre, the Westin Hyderabad Mindspace Hotel, The Trident Hyderabad, etc., and I'm not even talking about our beautiful world-class airport - a recipient of numerous international awards, with its convenient connectivity to the hotels and venues. We also have, as members in our Bureau, the nation's best and finest PCOs.

The importance of the holding of MICE events in Hyderabad is clearly recognised, as well as their economic impact to our city, society and nation.

Doctors are also coming back to Hyderabad to work here and medical tourism is an ongoing growth industry for the region. People from all corners of the globe come for treatment and procedures. Thus, Hyderabad has become a very suitable location to hold medical and pharmaceutical conferences, supplemented by exciting touristic excursion programmes. The region has grown rapidly and is continuing to grow as a global IT centre. We can list enterprises here that include Hewlett Packard, IBM, Microsoft, Google, Facebook, HSBC, Dell, etc.

**HQ: On a personal level, what do you like about Hyderabad ?**

*Gary Khan:* I always knew I would return home to India. I wanted to give something back to Hyderabad and the Bureau is the perfect vehicle for doing that. I certainly didn't come back for nothing. I longed for a growing vibrant destination, rich in potential. I clearly sense it here; there's a

certain way of working which resembles the Western methodical way. Our newly formed Telangana government borne out of the new state thinks fifteen years ahead and I'm in line with that. I simply love it here; it's like a nice big family working hand-in-hand together.

Also, when you come to Hyderabad, you don't just come to a solitary city in the world's largest democracy, you come to India itself. The City of Pearls, as they all call it, stands as a testimony to time that enunciates development and exponential growth. My utmost favourite part about Hyderabad is the flamboyant people we have here. The perfect galvanization of harmony and work ethics is what determines the population to work efficiently in their own respective sectors. 2015 and beyond is the Dawn of India, and Hyderabad is leading it!

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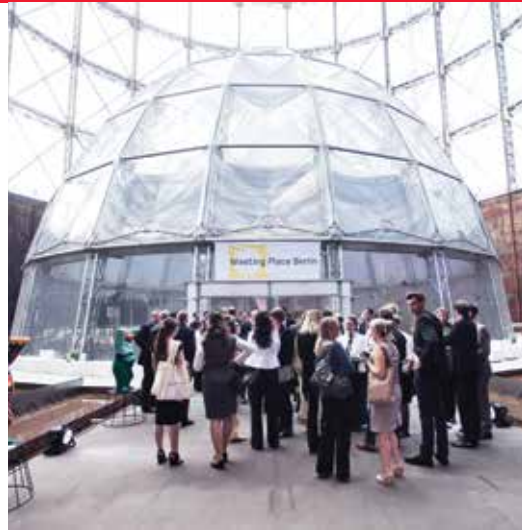
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# MEETING PLACE BERLIN

## An event that brings people together

At Meeting Place Berlin, from 2 to 6 July 2015, the German capital will present itself to 150 national and international top event planners. Together with Berlin's meeting industry partners, the *visitBerlin* Berlin Convention Office will provide information about trends and new developments in the city.

Heike Mahmoud, Director of Conventions at the *visitBerlin* Berlin Convention Office, says: 'Meeting Place Berlin is an excellent way for our customers to experience our city as a diverse meeting and convention destination. The personal exchanges during the event bring people together and provide incentive to further develop what Berlin has to offer to our customers.'

### TRABI SAFARI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD TOUR: COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PROGRAMME

The opening night in the AXICA Convention and Conference Centre offers the ideal setting for a first get-together in a pleasant atmosphere. Located directly at the Brandenburg Gate, this building is impressive with its unusual architecture, offering a first glimpse of the city's modern meeting and conference landscape.

On the following days, the decision-makers of the world's major associations, organisations, companies, and convention agencies will meet 50 Berlin suppliers from the MICE industry in two workshops at the newly opened Westhafen Event & Convention Center (WECC). The suppliers include hotels, locations, and

service providers. The WECC is the appropriate place for an intensive exchange: the former warehouse presents Berlin's dynamics and variety of offbeat locations.

In addition, site inspections will present the latest conference hotels and city venues. Varied incentives will provide unforgettable Berlin experiences: Nostalgic East Berlin fun awaits the participants, for example, on the Trabi Safari. No other vehicle in Berlin attracts more attention, and at the same time suits the city and its history better.

City tours will lead beyond known paths and well-known attractions such as the Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin TV tower. Participants will explore the city's different neighbourhoods. Along the way, small restaurants, shops and parks will reveal Berlin's truly distinctive character. At the "farewell party," delegates will enjoy a cocktail in Beach-Mitte – one of the largest beach bars in the capital – in the typical relaxed Berlin summer atmosphere.

### ENTHUSIASTIC PARTICIPANTS

Meeting Place Berlin is organised every two years by the *visitBerlin* Berlin

Convention Office together with its city-wide partners. Since 2005, Meeting Place Berlin has developed into an internationally known event, generating enthusiasm among past participants. Feedback has been positive. 'Thanks for fantastic days in Berlin. I have learned a lot, seen interesting meeting locations and new parts of Berlin', the representative of a medical association from Sweden summed up. An Italian incentive organiser added: 'I often join fam trips (since 15 years more or less) but this had been really different and top level in terms of programmes, venues and excursions proposed.' And a convention organiser from Israel was thrilled: 'The Meet Berlin Team showed the highest professionalism and it was a pleasure attending the event.'

The figures speak for themselves: 131,200 events, 10.93 million participants, and 7 million hotel stays in 2014. This makes Berlin one of the leading convention destinations. Worldwide Berlin ranks among the top 5 sites for association conventions: The German capital occupies fifth place in the latest ICCA statistics.

**More information and registration at [meeting-place-berlin.com](http://meeting-place-berlin.com)**

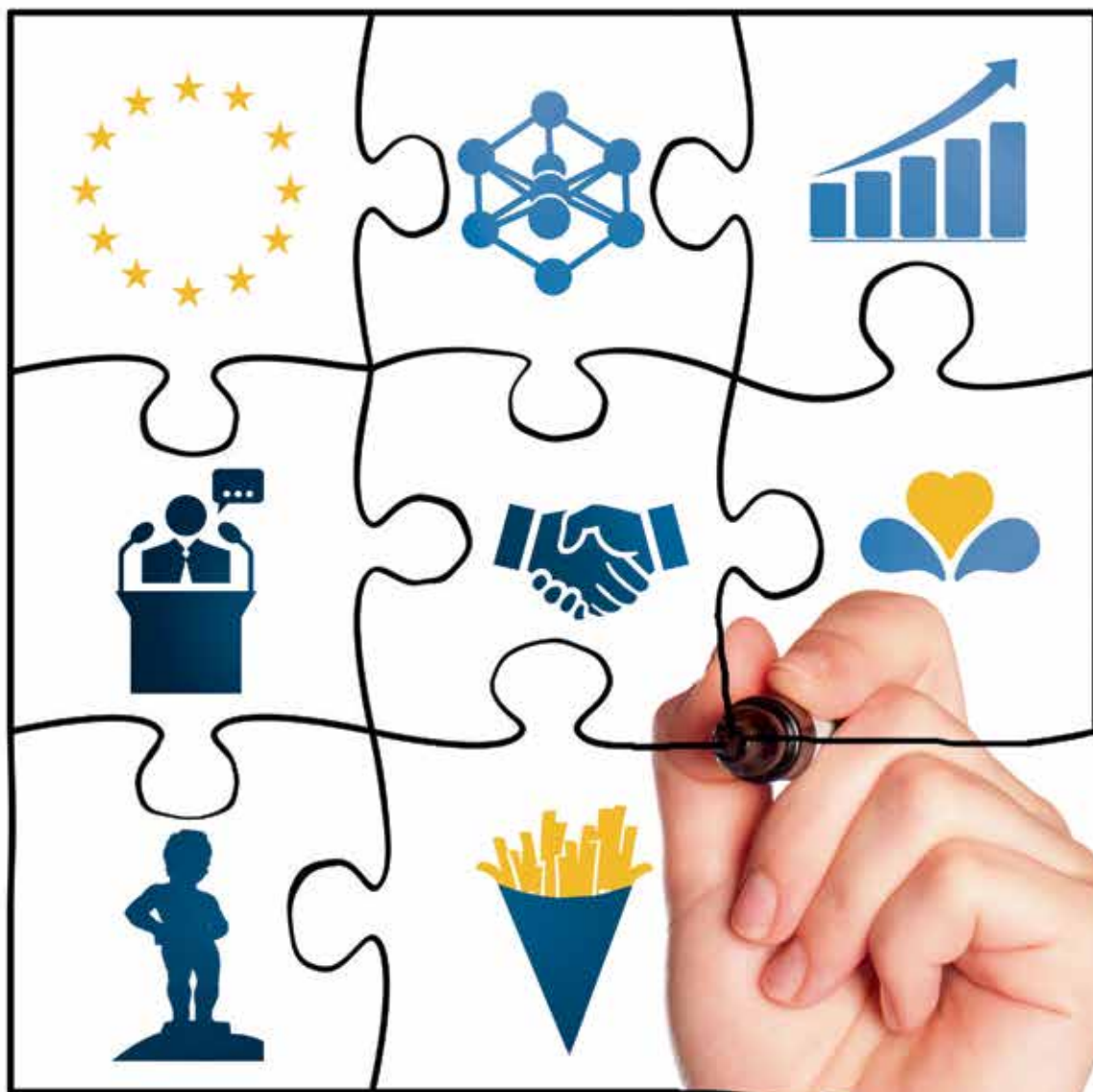
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# PUTRAJAYA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (PICC)

## An introduction

Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC) is one of Malaysia's premier meeting and convention venues. Nestled in an oasis of green parks, lakes and wetlands, it's a carefully planned, high-tech centre for meetings of any types and shapes.

Located 20 minutes from Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and just a stone's throw away from famous hotel such as Putrajaya Shangri-La, Marriot Putrajaya and Pullman Putrajaya Lakeside, PICC will soon have its own dedicated hotel which will make the organisation of international residential conferences very easy.

The first convention centre to be awarded the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Best Practices Award by ASEAN in 2007, it has reaped many accolades ever since. Among them, let's mention the Best Brands in

Services - Convention Centre Award by the Asia Pacific Brand Foundation (APBF) 2013-2014 and the International Quality Crown (IQC) Award 2014 in the Gold Category.

Rising majestically from the top of Putrajaya's highest point, PICC is both an iconic landmark overlooking Malaysia's government headquarters and one that incorporates a modern, spacious and versatile design, architecturally and culturally meaningful.

Joining forces with Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) at overseas







tradeshows, organising successful familiarization trips for conference organisers, PICC CEO Badlishah Ahmad says key target markets are regional markets, as well Europe and the US: 'We can comfortably accommodate mega events of up to 8,000 delegates. Other facilities at PICC include a Plenary Hall for 2,800 delegates, a Banquet Hall for 2,500 people, two multifunction halls, 10 conference rooms and a VVIP Lounge.'

**Website:** [www.picc.com.my](http://www.picc.com.my)  
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Why is PICC Malaysia's most exclusive meetings & conventions destination? Let us count the ways... With more venues, more functionality, more choices. With state-of-the-art facilities and world-class service and support teams, but with a distinctly Malaysian warmth and flavour. With an iconic building atop a hill and astride a shimmering lake, with dramatic 360° views of Malaysia's showcase city. PICC. There's so much to come for... And all under one imposing roof!



Where Great Minds Meet

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- **Begin your IMEX experience in style** with our much-loved cocktail reception – Association Evening – where you'll find yourself chatting merrily with peers and suppliers alike.
- **Just don't forget your notebook**, as you'll be filling it fast with contacts and pearls of wisdom.

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# PALAIS DES CONGRÈS DE MONTRÉAL WELCOMES THE WORLD!

In 2014, the Union of International Associations ranked Montréal the top city in the Americas for the number of international conventions hosted. Why is Montréal at the top of such an impressive list of cities? Outranking cities like New York, Chicago, Toronto, Rio de Janeiro or even Washington? This beautiful city has much to offer!

Montréal has established itself over the years as a host destination of several headquarters of major international organisations, but above all, as a great metropolis of knowledge and innovation, thanks to 200 research centres, 1,500 institutions active in research and development and the high calibre of its major universities. A very

Montréal is the vitality of its economic sectors, the excellent collaboration between the tourism industry partners, academia and business, the development of targeted strategic alliances and the dynamism of an efficient convention centre equipped with the latest event technologies. Moreover, the Palais des congrès de Montréal was

The events the Palais will soon welcome span-leading economic sectors like transportation, aerospace, information technology, entertainment and health sciences. Every year, 37% of conventions hosted at the Palais are associated with the health sector.

With 7,000 events and 17 million delegates hosted during the last three decades, Montréal and its Palais des congrès definitely have the passion and expertise to welcome the world!

## THE EVENTS THE PALAIS WILL SOON WELCOME SPAN-LEADING ECONOMIC SECTORS LIKE TRANSPORTATION, AEROSPACE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, ENTERTAINMENT AND HEALTH SCIENCES

attractive equation for international associations seeking academic centres developed for their conventions. But it takes more to stay at the top of the charts...

declared a finalist for the prestigious *World Best Congress Centre*, a recognition awarded by the AIPC (International Association of Convention Centres).

### CONTACT

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# THAILAND STRENGTHENS ITS POSITION AS A MEDICAL HUB FOR MEDICAL CONVENTIONS

In just over a few years, Thailand has become a global connection platform for health professionals. The country's profile as one of the world's leading hubs, well-equipped with expertise and resources in providing excellent medical, health and wellness services, will once again be strengthened when Bangkok welcomes more than 10,000 participants at the FDI Annual World Dental Congress (FDI AWDC) next September.

The World Dental Federation (FDI), which represents the worldwide profession of dentistry, is ready to develop in the Asia-Pacific region. Organising the largest convention for dentistry professionals from the world over, it has entrusted Thailand with the hosting of the FDI AWDC in September. During the signing ceremony between FDI and the Thai Dental Association in Istanbul in 2013, commentators pointed out the wisdom of the decision, given the rapid growth of dentistry in Thailand. According to recent estimates, today the country has indeed a workforce of some 12,000 dentists, about 5,800 per head of population.

According to the FDI, Thailand has also gained an enviable reputation for the quality of its oral care, backed by its Universal Coverage Programme, implemented in 2002, which gives Thai people better access to health services. Furthermore, rising awareness of dental and oral health and hygiene, a growing population and increasing per capita incomes will ensure a constant augmentation in demand for dental products and services.

In terms of Thailand's other significant resources for successful congresses, FDI highlighted the country's wide choice of hotels and other accommodation options, a very hospitable local population, superb cuisine and entertainment and a wealth of cultural opportunities. This is a notable plus for Thailand which is expert at combining business with pleasure for convention delegates.

One remarkable development for medical conferences in Thailand is that not only medical schools in Bangkok, but also in other secondary cities throughout the country, such as Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen and Songkhla, are now hosting more international conferences in partnership with international organisations from Asia-Pacific, Europe and America. It represents a bigger opportunity and a wider pool of resources and expertise in Thailand to be tapped into. No doubt it is a development that is definitely enhancing the country's global reputation among medical and health specialists.

[www.businesseventsthailand.com](http://www.businesseventsthailand.com)

## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL AND HEALTH CONFERENCES IN THAILAND

### 2015

- February: 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Regional Conference for Headache
- June: 15<sup>th</sup> Asian Conference on Clinical Pharmacy
- August: 46<sup>th</sup> World Congress of International Society of Surgery (ISW)
- September: FDI Annual World Dental Congress
- October: 10<sup>th</sup> International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics Asia & Oceania Regional Congress

### 2014 (list not exhaustive)

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Congress for Consensus in Pediatrics & Child Health
- 23<sup>rd</sup> World Professional Association for Transgender Health
- 1<sup>st</sup> Congress of ASEAN Ophthalmology Societies
- International Congress of Pharmaceutical Sciences – FIP 2014
- 30<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Academy of Pathology
- 17<sup>th</sup> International Congress in Audiological Medicine

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Bidding for the 18th IEEE CEFC

# AMBASSADORS HELP HANGZHOU WIN ASSOCIATION EVENTS

**Ambassadors are crucial in helping attract large international conferences as they are experts in their field and can help identify key events which they would like to see hosted in their hometown. Hangzhou, maybe more than anybody else, early understood this and has already worked with a network of ambassadors to secure association conferences.**

Creating valuable connections through a robust ambassador scheme is the strongest way to win bids and events: competition with leading cities across the world is fierce and ambassadors can really make a difference, raising the credibility of the city as a national and international event destination and help open pathways to attracting different subject matters and sponsors to the city.

## ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY

Among the 30 Hangzhou Convention Ambassadors, all leading members of Hangzhou's medical, academic, business and cultural industries, 14 come from Zhejiang University, one of China's oldest institutions of higher education. Founded in 1897, it's a comprehensive research university spanning 12 academic disciplines, covering philosophy, economics, law, education, literature, history, art, science, engineering, agriculture, medicine and management. In recent years, Zhejiang University has made abundant achievements in science, technology, humanities and social sciences.

If Hangzhou recently won the bid to host the 18<sup>th</sup> IEEE (The Institute of Electrical and

Electronics Engineers) CEFC (Conference on Electromagnetic Field Computation), it's mainly thanks to the effort of Yang Shiyu, professor at Zhejiang University and one of the ambassadors of MICE Hangzhou. IEEE is the world's biggest non-profit professional association dedicated to the advance

of technological innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity. IEEE has about 400,000 members, distributed over 160 countries around the world.

## FORMALLY CONNECTED

Being part of the ambassador programme allows you to more formally connect with all the help that's available in the city for hosting events, and let others see what the city can offer. Professor Wu Zongjie, also from Zhejiang University, helped secure the 2018 Association of Critical Heritage Studies Conference. The Association of Critical Heritage Studies is a network of scholars and researchers working in the

broad and interdisciplinary field of heritage and museum studies. Its primary aim is to promote heritage as an area of critical enquiry. A rather young organisation, it runs a biannual conference, the first of which was held at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

In Hangzhou in 2018, a few hundreds of papers, performances and roundtable discussions will be presented by scholars from around the world, exploring cutting

## CREATING VALUABLE CONNECTIONS THROUGH A ROBUST AMBASSADOR SCHEME IS THE STRONGEST WAY TO WIN BIDS AND EVENTS

edge research and innovative thinking in heritage and museum studies, and public history and memory studies. There will of course be a strong focus on Asia in the papers being presented, and a significant contribution of papers on Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as issues of multiculturalism, migration and diaspora.

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Linda Ngcipe & Marcel A.M. Vissers

# TSHWANE

## A new contender in the South African market

**There is no doubt that Church Square is Africa's prettiest city square. It is located in Tshwane, previously Pretoria (the name was changed in 2005), South Africa's administrative capital and seat of the government. The country's boldest construction project is also in Tshwane: a brand-new international convention centre situated in Centurion. Definitely worthwhile to put this new destination in the spotlight!**

*Text Marcel A.M.Vissers*

### BUSINESS IN JARACANDA CITY

Tshwane is called the Jaracanda City due to the jaracanda trees planted in the streets and parks and gardens. There business tourism is becoming the fastest growing industry. Tshwane is a hub for science and technology, and hosts nowadays a high number of national and international conferences. At this moment the CSIR International Convention Centre is the leading facility but that will soon change with the building of an international convention and entertainment centre. I visited the construction site in the good company of Linda Ngcipe, Executive Director of the Tshwane Convention Bureau. And in the evening I discovered the Jazz legends with the locals in some good taverns and shebeens. Tshwane is indeed South Africa's jazz capital.

### BUILDING AN ICON

The project has been mentioned several

times over the past but last year I witnessed the start of an ambitious plan with my own eyes. What is going on? The rejuvenation of a whole city!

Tshwane has a long-term development vision. One of the largest metropolitan areas in South Africa, it is opening a new chapter by developing the municipality into a first-class destination for visitors, investors and residents. The city will soon compete with Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban by building its own international convention centre in Centurion and is also planning to build a government boulevard to house government departments in the CBD.

By doing so, Tshwane wants to attract the lucrative conference market in the city, which is home to 132 embassies and four universities. By investing in infrastructure, it aims to attract more businesses, and prevent government departments from

moving into other areas such as Lynnwood and Hatfield.

The project on 10ha of prime land near the Gautrain Centurion station includes the creation of the tallest building in Africa - at 110 storeys high. The proposed Centurion SymbioCity will feature two office towers, and include hotels, retail facilities, a convention centre and residential space. The new conference centre is already set to open in 2020.

### A CITY TO VISIT

Apart from all the new projects, Tshwane is a Mecca for culture, architecture and entertainment. A visit of the Union buildings, a monument dedicated to past generations of policy makers and the home to new ones, is a must. Church Square, the historic centre, is the buzzing area of the city and very rich in heritage, such as the Ou Raadsaal, the Palace of Justice, the Law Chambers and the Nederlandsche Bank. But one of the best things to do is the Township Experience. Tshwane has also produced a number of jazz legends and you can interact with the locals in one of their colorful taverns.

[www.tshwane.gov.za](http://www.tshwane.gov.za)

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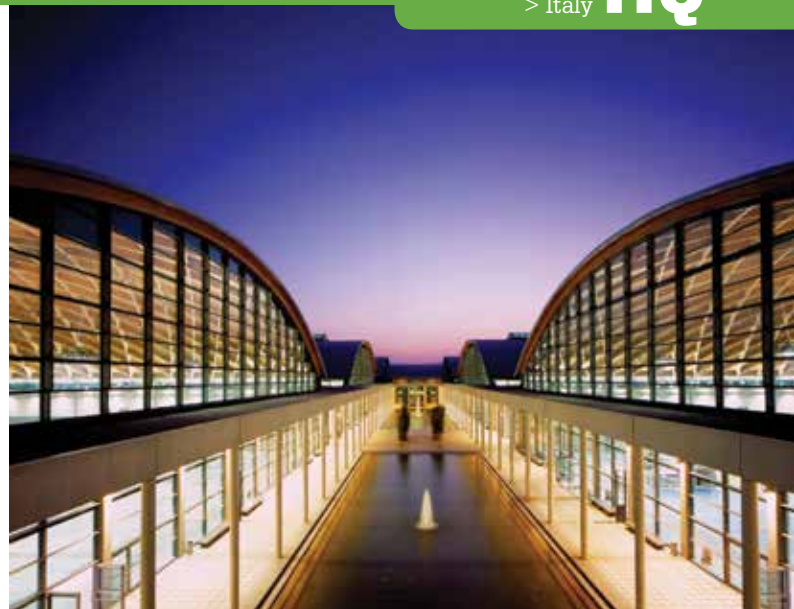
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## RIMINI BEGINS 2015 WITH A BANG

**2015 kicks off with big news for the Palacongressi and the Convention Bureau della Riviera di Rimini (CBRR): the fusion with Rimini Fiera Spa, making it the new Business Unit for congress activities.**

The move was motivated by the desire to place the Palacongressi on the international scene of MICE tourism and to promote Rimini on a worldwide scale. One of the most elegant and avant-garde trade fair venues in Italy, Rimini Fiera is one of the leaders in the Italian trade fair sector.

Becoming the new Congress Business Unit not only implies a sizeable increase in contacts and relations, it also means getting into the game with other international players and making full use of the possible synergies between congress and trade fair business. Thanks to the organisational experience and the relations Rimini Fiera has built up in the association sector, the CBRR is today capable of taking on major events, managing both production and development, including the sale of exhibits space and seeking out sponsors. Within the local area it develops economic and entrepreneurial potential and collaborates with major national and international trade associations in the leading sectors.

### **PRAISED FROM ALL PARTS**

The CBRR has been promoting Rimini since 1994, a city which is easily reachable and

has made hospitality its *raison d'être* with a diversity of quality accommodation facilities. Steeped in tradition, history, culture, sport, praised for its excellent food and wine, Rimini has also become a winning congress destination over the years.

The CBRR manages the Palacongressi and the conference business held at the Rimini Trade Fair and Exhibition Centre. In 2014, its team handled 114 events and over one million and fifty thousand participants.

The two flagships buildings include:

- A prestigious and contemporary convention centre, technologically advanced and green-oriented, versatile and flexible to cater for any type of event: 39 rooms seating a total of 9,000 guests, 4,700 seats in the plenary room and an amphitheatre accommodating up to 1,600, as well as 11,000 sqm of exhibit space.
- An innovative and ecological trade fair centre with a linear and single-storey structure, highly technological with a surface area of 460,000 sqm (109,000 sqm exhibit space) spread out over 16 halls, including 160,000 sqm of green area and its own internal railway station.

### **VERY POPULAR**

The two locations have become very popular hosting trade shows such as SIGEP (International Exhibition for Artisanal Gelato, Pastry, Confectionery and Bakery), ECOMONDO (International Trade Fair of Material & Energy Recovery and Sustainable Development) or TTG (The International B2B Tourism Fair). As to meetings, let's mention the Meeting for the Friendship Amongst Peoples (with 800,000 participants every year), the FISM World Championships of Magic, taking place in July 2015 with 5,000 magicians and the European Mineralogy Conference, in 2016 with over 1,000 participants.

Rimini Fiera has three distinct business areas:

- Management of prestigious spaces
- Providing a comprehensive, efficient and high quality service for trade fairs and congresses, events from A to Z
- Organisation and development of proprietary trade fairs and events

### **CONTACT**

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# SINGAPORE'S HIDDEN GEMS

It's easy to think of Singapore as all work and no play. A melting pot of cultures, with a rich and colourful immigrant history involving Chinese, Malay, Indian and British influences, it has a lot up its sleeves though, from delicious food to quirky shopping streets. Here we guide you through some attractive precincts, including Singapore River, Chinatown and Joo Chiat.

## FOLLOW THE RIVER

Running through the heart of the country is the Singapore River, whose banks have been a thriving area of activity and trade for decades. Today there are numerous entertainment and dining options to explore in the area.

The **Beer Market** is heavily inspired by Wall Street, with beer prices rising and falling depending on supply and demand. It carries an impressive selection of beers and ales, and also hosts company functions and beer tasting parties. Further up the river, **Kitchen + Bar Merry Men** offers and extensive drink selection and quirky ambience, but the real highlight has to be the Roast Duck Pizza! For those who prefer wine, the **Wine Connection Cheese Bar** @ Robertson Walk is an elegant, simple outlet, where over 40 types of cheese are available from all over Europe to accompany your classic reds and whites.

The nearby **Spathe Public House** is the place to go if you love your meat. Serving mammoth portions, it boasts chicken baked

with Tiger Beer (Singapore's national beer) or beef-rich burgers. The place can also be booked for events with up to 90 guests.

## MYSTERIES OF CHINATOWN

Minutes away from the Central Business District (CBD) is Ang Siang Hill and Club Street, a former Chinese enclave that now offers offbeat toy stores, hipster bars and retro clothing outlets.

For those with a love for theatre, **The Screening Room** is the perfect place to kick back and catch a flick or two after a hard day's work. Not too far away is the mysterious **Olde Cuban** whose bar carries quality stock from South America. A visit to **28 Hong Kong Street** is in order - but only if you can find it! This cool hideaway serves specialist American cocktails and prodigious punch bowls. For even more exclusivity, there's a 12-seater meeting room affectionately known as 'The Office'.

Finally, to get a feel of what dining must have felt like in pre-70's Singapore, **Chinatown**

**Food Street** is a somewhat accurate representation. With the luxury of modern air-conditioning, you can enjoy traditional cuisine from various Chinese regions there.

## JOO CHIAT

Once notorious as a red light district, Joo Chiat has found a new lease of life in recent years among the younger crowd. One of the newer offerings is **Immigrants**, a gastrobar that pays homage to early Singaporean heritage dishes. One can opt to hold events here, and special food menus can be catered for. Equally accomplished in traditional tastes are the chefs over at **PeraMakan** cooking perennial favourites.

For a food-themed stroll, start at the Joo Chiat Complex and check out the wide variety of traditional Malay herbs, spices and fabrics before heading down Joo Chiat Road for a small feast. First up, at number 95, is **Kway Guan Huat**, famous for their paper-thin popiah, the Singaporean version of a burrito. A few shophouses down the road is **Shah Zah Confectionery**. Continue down the road to number 125 to visit the quaint **Changi Junk Store** - a must visit for bargain hunters in search of nostalgic trinkets.

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Modern architecture designed by Herzog & de Meuron



Plenary Hall of OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel



Congress Center Basel alongside Basel Exhibition Centre

## SWITZERLAND CONVENTION & INCENTIVE BUREAU PRESENTS OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL IN BASEL, SWITZERLAND

On 4 and 5 December 2014, the 21<sup>st</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council was held at the Congress Center Basel, with delegations from the 57 OSCE member states travelling to Basel, and a total of some 2,000 participants in attendance. The OSCE Ministerial Council was held in Basel, Switzerland in the context of Switzerland's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014. The city of Basel created optimum framework conditions for this big event and, at the same time, took charge of security.

The Congress Center Basel is linked directly with the Basel Exhibition Centre and has direct access to the new building designed by Herzog & de Meuron. Thus, the Plenary Hall, in which the foreign ministers discussed the items on the agenda, was installed in the Event Hall on the ground floor of the new hall complex. The modern and compact environment at the Basel Exhibition Centre, spread out over a total of 141,000 m<sup>2</sup>, proved eminently suitable, providing the 80 individual meeting rooms that were required, the Media Center for more than 200 accredited press representatives, and at-seat catering for 1,200 people.

### SUPPORT IN ALL ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

The Congress Center Basel worked together closely with the City of Basel, as the host city, during the application process for the OSCE Ministerial Council already. With its close links to the different Chambers, associations and scientific institutions, the Congress Center Basel can support you too in your official applications to host congresses. The experienced team provides you with organisational support and assistance on all

matters. The Congress Center Basel boasts attractive services and innovative solutions in all the different price categories, carefully tailored to your individual needs.

### TRINATIONAL AND COSMOPOLITAN BASEL

Basel is Switzerland's most important exhibition site and one of the leading locations in Europe. Centrally located at the point where Switzerland, France and Germany all meet, this city on the Rhine is a key international transport hub: with its airport close to the city, a Rhine port, two central stations, a well-developed public transport network and a modern road system ensuring good connections to everywhere in the world. A beautiful, well-tended old city, the river Rhine, secluded parks - which are both clean and safe - all of this is Basel.

### CONGRESS CENTER BASEL AS PART OF THE MCH GROUP

The Congress Center Basel - Switzerland's biggest congress centre - is part of the dynamic MCH Group. The MCH Group is a leading international live-marketing company group and offers a unique services

network spanning the entire exhibition and event market. As a customer of the Congress Center Basel, you benefit from this experience and efficient networking capability in all your projects, at all the different levels.

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