

HEAD^QUARTERS

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Colophon

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Marcel A.M. VISSERS
Editor in Chief

The rise of stand-up meetings?

I was listening to the radio the other day and was surprised to learn that, on average, I spend 9 hours every day, sitting on a chair, a seat or a sofa. Of course, this is true for the average inhabitant of my country, and not just about me. This is also the case in many other European countries. So what about the average meetings industry person who is constantly sitting at meetings?

According to the Flemish Institute for the Promotion of Health and Sickness Prevention, sitting is bad for your health. Their report states that it's time we put a halt to the culture of sitting. What does the report say precisely?

In total, we sit down an average of 50 to 85% of the day, especially at school and at work. Children in elementary school spend nearly 40% of their school hours sitting and secondary school pupils as much as 50%. Flemish office employees and managers spend 70% of working hours sitting. There's more chair time at home: for meals or in front of the TV or computer. Recent research reveals that sitting all day increases the risk of, among others, heart diseases, bowel cancer, depression and premature death.

Researchers are recommending to reduce long periods of sitting and to stand up after sitting for 20 to 30 minutes. Are you seated for long periods at work or at home? Get up after half an hour and stretch your legs for example. Or make your phone calls standing up instead of sitting down. And what about stand-up meetings?

We are part of a sedentary industry and are exposed to health risks. At the last ICCA world congress in Buenos Aires, I tried to attend stand-up meetings. Not an easy thing – after all I'm no stand-up comedian and my peers know this!

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INTERNATIONAL SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION

Experts in waste management

The International Solid Waste Association, ISWA, organises many international events, working groups, board meetings, conferences and congresses. The ISWA World Congress 2015 was held in Antwerp from 7 to 9 September and the event clearly made its mark. Gerfried Habenicht, Communication Manager, told me *“It was a complete success!”*. But who and what is ISWA?

Interview Marcel A.M. Vissers

ISWA is the world’s leading network promoting professional and sustainable waste management. More precisely, the International Solid Waste Association is a global, independent and non-profit

comprehensive and professional waste management.

HQ: How were the reactions after the congress in Antwerp?

Gerfried Habenicht: We received a lot of extremely positive feedback from the participants. So, there’s only one possible

making association, working in the public interest and is the only world-wide association promoting sustainable,

ISWA FACTS AND FIGURES

- ISWA was founded in 1970.
- the ISWA General Secretariat is situated in Vienna, Austria.
- Managing Director: Herman Koller
- Event and Project Manager: Kim Winternitz
- ISWA has members in more than 100 countries, with National Member Organisations in 41 of these countries.
- ISWA has some 1,400 members worldwide and additionally some 100,000 members associated with their National Member Organisations.

answer to that question: this event was a success in every aspect.

HQ: Who decides where the ISWA World Congresses are held?

Gerfried Habenicht: Our national member organisations can submit a bid. In the end the ISWA board decides who has made the best proposal. A world congress is organised every year with an average of 1,250 delegates attending. The congress was organised in Antwerp this year, also because Flanders is a leader in the field of waste management.

THE ISWA CONGRESS WAS ORGANISED IN ANTWERP THIS YEAR BECAUSE FLANDERS IS A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

HQ: You mentioned anywhere in the world.

Gerfried Habenicht: Yes, the congress can be held in any country where we have a national member. This are currently 41 countries. We do consider a fair distribution around the world. The next congress will be held in Novi Sad, Serbia, in September 2016. Then we will be in Baltimore, USA, and the year after in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 2019 we will be holding the world congress in Bilbao, Spain. We haven't decided yet for 2020.

HQ: What kind of venues do you prefer?

Gerfried Habenicht: It depends on the choice of the national member who in principle is responsible for the organisation on the spot. In general, a congress centre is chosen in a location with a wide range of hotels and an airport nearby.

HQ: Does ISWA use a PCO?

Gerfried Habenicht: Again, it's the same principle and this depends on the national member organisation. In Antwerp, we very



Philip Heylen, Antwerp's Vice Mayor for Culture, Economy and City Maintenance, chaired the ISWA Congress in Antwerp

successfully worked together with alderman Philip Heylen and his staff, who only for selected tasks used the services of a PCO. The same goes for our 2014 World Congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where our national member partners partly organised things themselves and partly cooperated with a PCO.

www.iswa.org

HISTORY OF ISWA INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES (average of 1,250 delegates)

- 2014: Sao Paulo Brasil
- 2015: Antwerp, Belgium
- 2016: Serbia
- 2017: Baltimore, USA
- 2018: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2019: Bilbao, Spain
- 2020: Bid open in January 2016



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Case Study

ESOT AT SQUARE-BRUSSELS MEETING CENTRE

The biennial, now paperless congress of ESOT, the European Society for Organ Transplantation, took place in the capital of Europe at SQUARE-BRUSSELS MEETING CENTRE last September. Themed “From the Heart of Europe to the World of Transplantation”, it was the occasion for the organisation to showcase how innovative it can be, engaging participants from all corners of the globe, and for the main congress centre in Brussels to successfully push its limits in terms of services.

Report Rémi Dévé

Building on the recent successful meetings in Vienna and Glasgow, the ESOT Congress used all forms of modern educational and training aids in use. Besides different State of the Art sessions dealing with several, still burning, questions about organ donation and transplantation, many important European contributions in the field of organ and tissue transplantation as well as procurement were highlighted. Attention was also given to the European view in relation to ethical and legal aspects in the field of donation and transplantation.

SUCCESS FACTORS

In a very competitive world when there is a constant need for an association to remain relevant and innovative, Annalisa Ponchia, ESOT Congress Director, has grasped, maybe like only a handful of association executives, that you have to stay on top of your game, working and performing to maintain the reputation of your organisation steady. She says: “Associations have understood the importance

of a strategic approach to make their meetings grow, the critical success factors and the impact of technology on the success of their events. Communication is also crucial and the use of social media has become mandatory. My personal experience proves that associations are now setting the trend and dare to taste the waters with regards to technology and new formats.”



Annalisa Ponchia

performances on stage with more in-depth interviews from a so-called Transplant Live Studio. Then there was the ESOT2015 ePoster Lounge, a feature allowing delegates to request an appointment with poster presenters or join other booked slots in an intimate and relaxed setting, thus boosting the learning and networking experience.

In the end - and in the beginning in fact - it was all about creating a level playing field for the 3,600 participating

IN THE END - AND IN THE BEGINNING IN FACT - IT WAS ALL ABOUT CREATING A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR THE 3,600 PARTICIPATING TRANSPLANTATION SPECIALISTS

And that’s exactly what came to life at SQUARE-BRUSSELS MEETING CENTRE. Firstly, people who could not make it to Brussels were still be able to catch selective bits of content through five interactive online shows, combining the most thought-provoking live

transplantation specialists. A sophisticated bespoke App made none to miss the ‘old’ paper program and abstracts books. To achieve this ESOT and SpotMe developed matchless functionalities to cater for all tastes and need.



ESOT2015 ePoster Lounge



ESOT2015 registration area



Attendees brought their own tablets and the organisation provided loaner iPads for the others. And the investment paid off: over four days the participants posted literally thousands of session comments, easily appointments and exchanged dozens of

transplantation research in Belgium is at the head of this field with a host of innovations and multicentre studies."

Ariane Deguelle, CEO of GL events in the Benelux, the company behind SQUARE,

our boundaries, we have pioneered the way Brussels can host large events. And the full cooperation between all stakeholders involved also helped tremendously: it is a unified effort that led to the success of the ESOT Congress."

ALONG WITH THEIR PARTNERS, THE IDEA FOR SQUARE AND GL EVENTS IS TO FORESEE THE NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR CLIENTS, EVEN BE ONE STEP AHEAD OF THEM

thousands messages. They also used the mobile event app to document their event journeys, saving abstracts, posters and notes to their online briefcases – it was indeed a paperless congress, from top to bottom.

VENUE AS ATTRACTION

All those efforts, from a "content" point of view were of course backed up by the team working at SQUARE, which was instrumental in getting the event to Brussels. SQUARE was more convincing mainly due to Belgium's and Brussels' attractiveness as a venue and to a modern, innovative congress format. Professor Jan Lerut, who strongly supported the candidacy of Brussels and SQUARE to host the Congress, explains: "Belgium has established an international reputation for itself in the field of organ transplantation. This is expressed not only in the high number of organ transplants, but also in the excellent results obtained. Besides,

adds: "Once again, the tried and tested cooperation between SQUARE, the organisers and VisitBrussels played a decisive role here. This was particularly difficult at first, since ESOT thought our venue was too small, especially in terms of exhibition space. But our remarkable and mutual perseverance paid off: if ESOT's organising committee showed flexibility, we've also shown our limits were opportunities. By literally increasing our capacities and pushing

ESOT2015 IN NUMBERS

Four full congress days
3,600 onsite delegates
+500 online unique users
181 speakers
1,235 session comments
30,000+ messages
1,650 abstracts
4,587 room nights

Along with their partners, the idea for SQUARE and GL events is to foresee the needs and expectations of their clients, even be one step ahead of them, working on meeting design, room layouts, and the overall atmosphere of the venue as to make it the epitome of knowledge transfer, whether in the field of science, politics or society. That's exactly what happened in the preparation stages of ESOT2015: the teams working at SQUARE initiated a certain number of propositions to make things smooth and easy that was welcomed with open arms by ESOT organisers.

Stimulating various economic partnerships and sharing their expertise with suppliers from the corporate, academic and institutional world, SQUARE and GL events are surely moving ahead of many of their competitors.

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SURVIVE AND EXCEL WITH EVALUATION

Let's get straight to the point: evaluation is a strategic tool, not just a measurement method. Use it to demonstrate progress and survive until the next annual meeting, sure, but to genuinely excel, you must strategically plan to impress members and stakeholders.

Text Philip Springuel, Head of Corporate Affairs, European Food Information Council (EUFIC), and ESAE President

A successful organisation will meet its objectives, but an excellent organisation demonstrates impressive achievement and inspires a loyal following. When you only measure progress toward objectives, you are missing the most important driver of excellence: evaluating and communicating. If you say *"this year, we'll deliver 100,000 more free emergency meals than last year,"* you need to quantitatively measure actual donations, without a doubt. But don't forget to qualitatively evaluate the impact and communicate compelling stories surrounding this achievement that will impress and motivate your stakeholders. When you are an NGO saving lives, this seems obvious. When you are a trade association that represents makers of widgets, it is less so, but just as important.

Baselines, metrics, benchmarks, SWOT analyses, ROIs - and so many other evaluation acronyms - will surely help with measurement, and there are many experts that you can turn to for advice. But have these metrics done

enough to inspire staff, association members and external stakeholders to follow you further into the future of your organisation? When you underline the number of followers and likes in social media channels, but do not evaluate and communicate the emotion your messages and mission impress upon your audience, you will not inspire continuous excellence or survive to your next AGM.

As an association executive, let's assume you have 3 key priorities: i.) Demonstrate relevance, ii.) Attract members and funds, iii.) Satisfy core constituents (members and stakeholders). So, when your Board of Directors expects you to justify continued 'wasteful' or 'unnecessary' communications expenses (how many of us have heard this!?), don't waste any time evaluating the past: make plans to exceed measurable expectations today, but much more importantly, think ahead very strategically about how you will draw a picture of your achievements that can inspire a visionary future.



Philip Springuel

EXECUTIVE MASTER IN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

ESAE and partners invite you to apply to its Executive Master in International Association Management. The next session begins 14 January 2016. (Details: solvay.edu/iam).

Association executives need both policy perspective and core management skills to navigate and lead their associations in continuously changing economic environments. To improve the leadership, strategic planning and management skills of Europe's top association managers, the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management, the European Society of Association Executives (ESAE), the Union of International Associations (UIA), the Federation of European and International Associations (FAIB) and VisitBrussels, collectively designed and support the academic structure of this Executive Master course.

Keep in mind that 'value' is a perception that can be shaped by one part measurement, one part evaluation and one part inspiration: do quantitative measurements, communicate qualitative evaluation, then tell the inspirational story

IMPRESSING YOUR CORE CONSTITUENCY TAKES INSPIRED LEADERSHIP INFUSED WITH CRAFTY STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND IT CAN BE RISKY

that wraps this all together. Did you "save lives" (or just as importantly for some association boards, did you "save money"), or did you just "meet donations targets" or "increase followers on social media"? In assessing 'reach' (which is quantitative), also offer 'tone' (which is qualitative) with

impressive storytelling to add to your quantitative reporting.

Impressing your core constituency therefore takes inspired leadership infused with crafty strategic planning, and it can be risky. But if you set the stage for success rather than just measuring it, you can inspire continuous organisational excellence.

With this, I again invite you to contact me with questions, comments and suggestions at president@esae.org. I also encourage you to consider applying to ESAE and partners' Executive Master in International Association Management, which offers a unique platform for learning to concretely develop the visionary leadership skills we discuss in this column. One recent graduate said the course offers a "blend of Solvay professors and international association experts providing a broad theoretical base flavoured

with case studies, bringing situations to life and assisting you in applying the knowledge."

For more information

ESAE – European Society of Association Executives

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LEADING WITHOUT FORMAL AUTHORITY

How to Get Things Done When You're Not in Charge

You don't have to look far to find numerous examples of how complex our organizational lives have become. We work in matrix structures. We have diverse stakeholders to manage who often work at cross purposes. We facilitate teams of external people with strong opinions on how we should run our organizations. We are expected to exercise leadership up, across and outside our organizations. The problem is that this complexity has increased faster than leaders' capacity to deal with it.

Text Susan West

The challenge is to mobilize your leadership and influence to get things done effectively and sustainably when you aren't in a position of formal authority. In addition, you have to do it without damaging relationships.

Success involves the understanding and application of 4 principles:

- Recognize how we're hardwired to behave under pressure
- Practice new behaviors that unlock liberating leadership alternatives
- Engage people in a process that creates value for organizations and customers

- Use communication to create shared reasoning and commitment

THE INHERITED MODEL

Think about a time when you had a tough conversation that did not go well. You knew you were right, but they just didn't get it. Tensions ran high until you finally agreed to disagree. What a waste of time and energy. Why does this happen? The short answer is your amygdala, the part of the brain designed to protect physical and emotional well-being. It's a sensor that looks for threats and when there is danger, signals the body to focus resources on survival.

Imagine crossing the street and all of a sudden a speeding car is heading straight for you. Your brain tells your body to release stress hormones and you get a surge of energy that allows you to jump to safety. In a split second you are more aware, awake and laser-focused. Now imagine your boss sends you an email marked urgent at ten o'clock at night. Your amygdala doesn't distinguish between life threatening and tough work issue. The hard-wiring is activated only this time instead of saving your life, it causes you to lose sight of the big picture, stop listening and restricts problem-solving abilities.

Exercising leadership requires more of the prefrontal cortex part of our brain, also known as the “Executive Brain”. That’s where cognitive functions like making trade-off decisions, distinguishing among different options and analyzing risk take place. Recognizing how our brains react under stress and anxiety is key to changing how we show up as leaders.

THE CHALLENGE IS TO MOBILIZE YOUR LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE TO GET THINGS DONE EFFECTIVELY AND SUSTAINABLY WHEN YOU AREN'T IN A POSITION OF FORMAL AUTHORITY

Thanks to the groundbreaking research and thought leadership of Dr. Chris Argyris, Professor Emeritus at Harvard Business School, we know how leaders behave in real time when under pressure. Argyris’ original research¹ studied 8,000 leaders in organizations across the globe and determined that all people in all cultures defaulted to certain behaviors under moderate stress. This universal pattern of behavior includes:

- Undisciplined analysis
- Maximizing comfort and minimizing stress
- Win/lose mentality
- Controlling
- Trying to appear rational

Over the last 20 years, the Cambridge Leadership Group added to this body of knowledge with action research and development of 25,000 leaders across companies and cultures. Their work identified advanced competencies and behaviors leaders can use to respond to increased organizational and business complexity. We aspire to achieve outcomes that move our organizations forward. In order to achieve that, there are certain things we have to do differently.

THE BREAKTHROUGH MODEL

To avoid breakdowns and have real breakthroughs, leaders need to learn how to:

- **Engage** the real challenges
- **Express** emotion productively
- **Collaborate** on problem-solving, not just action-planning
- **Be open** to explore and test all views

It takes discipline, focus and practice to catch and correct yourself when you fall prey to the inherited behavior patterns. The goal is to stop struggling to manage difficult conversations and strained relationships and to start leading in a way that builds trust and creates value.

MOBILIZING OTHERS ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION

Mobilizing people is a process where leaders influence, focus their efforts and measure progress. Each step can be used as a metric that enables leaders to know whether they are on the right track to engage people in ways that will produce value for the organization and its customers.

Most people do well with the first “A”, the up-front analysis. The mistake they make is to jump right into action mode without engaging others. They try to get agreement to the solution without getting agreement on the real issues. We live in a “get it done”, “just do it” world. Unfortunately the seduction to just do it ends up costing us even more time as we re-visit unproductive conversations. A disciplined approach covering all four A’s can help prevent derailments.

LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS

Communication breakthroughs don’t happen on their own. Even the most naturally gifted communicators use certain techniques to increase the probability that real understanding and learning occur. Leadership conversations have four steps and the point of entry depends on the context. What’s important is to use all the steps as you build understanding and commitment to action.

- **Point of view** - state your point of view and own the fact it is a concern
- **Reasoning** - say why it’s important, be fact-based
- **Inquiry** - ask for their view, avoid yes/no questions
- **Listening** - really listen to their views and reasoning, avoid the temptation to go back inside your own head

It seems simple, however, in practice relatively straight-forward topics require several iterations and complex topics can require even more. Meaningful dialogue is an investment to help people understand and accept solutions they may not otherwise have considered or actively worked against. At its heart is the achievement of shared reasoning and trust.

So the next time you find yourself being asked to lead and influence outside your scope of authority while building relationships and deepening trust, remember you have some liberating choices.

Susan West is a leadership consultant and professor based in Brussels. She collaborates with the Cambridge Leadership Group on breakthrough leadership throughout Europe.

¹ Argyris, C., Schön, D.A. 1978. Organizational Learning: a Theory of Action Perspective. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Mobilizing as a process...





ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

How to measure success and what to do with the results

To survive in today's competitive MICE environment, you need to excel. To excel, a company needs to focus on all parts of the organisation, optimizing the use and effectiveness of all of its resources.

After many years of exploring various approaches to improve performance in the meetings sector and bring about organisational excellence, I have come to realise that there are 6 key elements that need to be managed to excel and all 6 must be managed simultaneously to keep them all moving forward at the same time.

1. Process
2. Project Management
3. Culture
4. Change
5. Knowledge
6. People

By effectively managing these 6 key elements and leveraging their interdependencies and reactions, a company can bring

about tremendous positive change and to the outputs of the meeting. On the softer side of organisational excellence, there must be desire, drive and passion to be the very best you can be. An ability to look inward and carry out self-assessment and continuous improvement and implementation creates the base for organisational excellence, sustainability and future success.

PROCESS

To manage a process, we must define and agree upon:

1. The meeting objectives and an output requirement statement between the process owner and the client. We must define expectations, determine what results the client wants from their

meeting and how will it be achieved over a specific time period.

2. An input requirement statement between the process owner and suppliers.
3. A process that is capable of transforming the delivery of the meeting that meets the clients' quality requirements.
4. Feedback measurement systems between process and the client and between the process and the suppliers.

Process must be managed at both the micro-level, within a team or departments and at the macro-level, directed at managing process that flows across departments within the company. Refining the process is an ongoing activity to ensure the core objectives of the company and the client are consistently being met.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Processes define how the company functions and projects are the means by which companies improve their process. Therefore, we must consistently assess and measure the results of our meetings, assess the people who manage them, and ensure we retain intellectual capital and knowledge transfer.

Project managers require skill, training and effective leadership specifically related to their type of meeting. In today's busy MICE environment, companies have numerous event projects running at the same time. Many of these projects are interlinked and interdependent. Their requirements and schedules are continuously changing, causing a chain reaction through the company. As a result the company may not manage each project individually. It has to manage its portfolio of projects, making the proper trade-off of personnel and priorities.

CULTURE

There is a need for an appropriate culture to support achieving organisational excellence. Client focus, systems approach, teamwork, creativity, involved management and continuous improvement are the aspects that facilitate improved organisational excellence, growth, and competitiveness. It's important to complement process and project management with innovation – it will result in the successful exploitation of new ideas. A clear synergy appears between the two corporate success factors as they are often integrated under an appropriate corporate culture. The results can lead to substantial improvements within the company together with improved creativity in how you deliver your clients' meeting.

CHANGE

We must embrace change if we are to be successful in our challenging world of meetings. Change management systems are made up of three distinct elements:

- Defining what will be changed
- Defining how to change
- Making change happen

An effective change management system requires us to step back and define what will be changed. Which of the key business

drivers needs to be changed. This applies to the overall company and to each meeting/project it takes on to ensure that we are meeting the demands of our clients and their client – the delegate.

KNOWLEDGE

In today's world of technology, more than ever, knowledge is key to organisational excellence. However, we are overwhelmed with so much information that we don't have time to absorb it all. The critical element to knowledge management is the documentation of its knowledge.

TO SUCCEED IN THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT OF THE MEETINGS MARKET PLACE, WE NEED TO EXCEL IN ALL PARTS OF THE BUSINESS

Given the endless information that clogs up our computers, desks and minds, a knowledge management system needs to be designed around the company's key capabilities and competencies. Documentation of knowledge leads to improved efficiencies in achieving the desired ROI of the meeting and optimizing the effectiveness of all of its resources. The true standard of success for knowledge management is the number of people who access and implement ideas from the company knowledge network. The biggest challenge is changing the company culture from knowledge-hoarding to knowledge-sharing. To achieve this, time is needed not just to documenting knowledge, a lot of time needs to be dedicated to sharing knowledge and ensuring knowledge that rests in the minds of individuals is shared amongst all individuals in the company.

I achieve the softer side of knowledge sharing through creativity forums every two weeks. Each individual must come to the table with a new idea or experience that is worth sharing. This may relate to the format and design of the meeting, the meeting content, the marketing of the meeting, new technology and so on. All shared knowledge must be consistently transformed into a format that can be easily shared amongst everyone in the company.

PEOPLE

The business of meetings is very much about people. People are at the heart of everything we do. When we talk about people in the meetings sector, we are talking about it in the broadest sense. It is all the resources that are available to the company. This includes employees, management, suppliers, alliances and partnerships, clients and knowledge. The interconnection and relationship building between all resources is critical to achieving organisation excellence. It takes communication, training, teamwork, empowerment, respect, honesty, leadership, quality and fairness to get the

best from your most valuable asset in a service industry – your talent, your people, your knowledge bank.

In conclusion, clients won't accept second best. To succeed in the competitive environment of the meetings market place, we need to excel in all parts of the business. The internet allows our clients to shop globally, so it's easy for them to get the best quality, reliability and value. Clients are concerned about service and quality, but they are also about dealing with companies who care, are quick to respond, will listen, will bring innovative ideas and processes to their meeting, and react to their unique requirements.

This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author Nicola McGrane, IAPCO Council, and Managing Director of Conference Partners Ltd., Dublin, Ireland. IAPCO represents today 120 professional organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries. info@iacpo.org / www.iapco.org



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CHANGE IS HAPPENING WITH OR WITHOUT YOU

ENITED Business Events Experts, Managing Directors Ivo Franschitz, Rosa B. Reyero Miguelez and Senior Consultant Henrik von Arnold share their insights about the major, future challenges faced by international associations, and consequently the way to measure their success in the long run.

HQ: Mr. Franschitz, we had the chance to talk before and you said: “The world has changed but the associations have not”. It’s quite provocative, isn’t it?

Franschitz: Yes, I am aware of that, and it is meant as a wake-up call. The truth is, there are, of course, some international associations which have recognized the change in their business environment. They have started to change their tactics by adapting their offer to the existing membership market. But the majority of them appear to be frozen in time, for many reasons, and mostly unaware of what the future will bring. They do have to understand their world is changing with or without them.

Reyero Miguelez: We are living in an information society. Information is available all around the clock and all over the world. Therefore the demands and expectations of people in their search for information have changed and still do. Years ago everybody booked a journey in a travel agency. Because the information the people were looking for was available only there. Now it is just a few clicks away on the web. Travel agencies, as the former gatekeepers of that needed information, have lost their main purpose. The same scenario also applies to print media businesses. They all were forced to develop new strategies, they had to think about their new and future clients’ needs and to modify their offerings.

HQ: But how does this affect the associations? They are information-providers by themselves.

Franschitz: That’s a good point. I believe one of the major flaws of the basic concept of associations nowadays is their “exclusive” approach by creating barriers, through

estimated, yet. But change is happening. At the latest when the digital natives are the new clientele. They are fast, flexible and used to permanent dialog. They have increasing demands on information flow. The members as known today, who pay their fees once a year and are satisfied with

BY RETHINKING THE REASON FOR THEIR EXISTENCE, ASSOCIATIONS NEED TO REDEFINE THEIR PURPOSE, THEIR STRATEGIES AND DEFINITION OF FUTURE MARKETS AND, CONSEQUENTLY THEIR TACTICS

monetary, educational, occupational and geographical means. They also consider and treat their information and their platforms as exclusive goods. However, in many cases, the reality is that their information is not exclusive enough anymore. There are a lot of other sources and networks in a global digital world competing with each other. You do not have to be a member of an association or a participant at their annual meetings anymore to have access to it.

HQ: Mr. von Arnold, recently you asked the Managing Directors of six leading international associations about their opinion, experience and challenges in their daily business. What’s their point of view?

von Arnold: The effects of increasing digitization (live-streaming, hybrid meetings, etc.) in the meeting world cannot be accurately

the things they usually get, will be a thing of the past. Therefore associations will need to stop defining their markets by members and participants, and start to see and approach them as their potential clients. As business corporations, they have to have a clear purpose and vision and a clear strategy.

HQ: And what are the main challenges associations see today?

von Arnold: As a consequence of all of the above, the associations already find that financing is increasingly difficult. The acquisition of sponsors requires high levels of manpower and new solutions. The situation is also made more difficult by stricter compliance regulations and higher member demands. Moreover the potential participants have consistently less time and financial resources. They attend one top event



each year. And this means internal competitions between association meeting organisers. It will be all about offering added value to the target group.

HQ: If you were an association, what would you do in the current situation?

Reyero Miguelez: First of all, I would start by asking myself the most fundamental questions: “Why am I (the association) here?” and “What is my purpose?” Followed by: “Why should potential clients choose me or my offer?” Or in the corporate marketing language: “What is my USP (Unique selling proposition)?” “Where do I differentiate myself from my competitors in the market?”

Franschitz: By rethinking the reason for their existence, associations need to redefine their purpose, their strategies and definition of future markets and, consequently their tactics. No matter if you are a for-profit or non-profit organisation you need a clear vision. It is your soul, this is what you want to be. That enables you to develop precise strategies and objectives and create tailor-made tactics. Your action plan to reach your operational goals is the final step. This is

the basis for a sustainable development of every association.

HQ: And how do you measure success of associations in the future?

Franschitz: Following our point-of-view and arguments of the future of associations, of course, also the criteria and methods for measuring the success will have to be designed anew. To take an example, if the purpose of an association in the future is to create a community of common interest, in an inclusive way, instead of maintaining an exclusive and closed membership model, it is obvious that counting membership and meeting participation numbers becomes obsolete. New criteria could be, for instance, the variety and diversity of the “followers” of the association or the “connectivity” to other entities with similar subject matters.

This article is a contribution of ENITED, a European Business Event Agency. ENITED provides solutions in the field of Live Communication, with a 360° approach and their own ENITED Excellent.C Model©. ENITED works with ambitious corporations, active associations, and up-and-coming destinations. More info: www.enited.eu / welcome@enited.eu

WHAT'S THE UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (UIA)?

The Union of International Associations is a non-profit, independent, apolitical, and non-governmental institution in the service of international associations. Since its foundation in 1907, the UIA is a leading provider of information about international non-profit organisations and a premium networking platform between international organisations and the meeting industry worldwide.

Main activities:

- Yearbook of International Organisations - contains information on over 68,000 international organizations active in all fields of human endeavour, in all corners of the world.
- International Congress Calendar - with information on over 428,000 international meetings. Available online, in pdf, and on paper.
- Annual Associations Round Table

For more information, please contact uia@uia.org



SO MANY WAYS TO EXPLORE SINGAPORE!

Whether you're in Singapore for the very first time, you just drop by on your way to some place else or you want to live like locals do, the ways to discover and experience Singapore are legions.

... AS A TRANSIT PASSENGER

Aimed at providing a more in-depth Singapore experience beyond Changi Airport, the "Free Singapore Tour" has taken more than one million passengers on free guided tours of Singapore's vibrant landscape and heritage attractions. As part of a strategic partnership between Singapore Airlines, the Singapore Tourism Board and Changi Airport Singapore, these tours available to transit passengers with a minimum stop-over of six hours have been refreshed and enhanced, now boasting longer itineraries (2.5 hours) and more frequent tours with both day and night options covering a greater range of iconic sights, photo stops, and seasonal editions during festive periods. (www.changiairport.com/en/airport-experience/attractions-and-services/free-singapore-tour.html)

... AS A FIRST-TIME VISITOR

Explore and appreciate Singapore's rich heritage through the captivating stories and works of local craftsmen at **CRAFT | Singapore**. The exhibition, curated by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), features

traditional and contemporary crafts found in Singapore's precincts. It is taking place at the newly-opened Singapore Visitor Centre at 216 Orchard Road.

Now in its second phase, the exhibition currently showcases **Evolution of Craftsmen** till 21 February 2016. It features works by contemporary creative talents who are blazing new trails through the development of new creative works. Their Singapore stories will bring to light their personal experiences in the development of their craft.

"There is a myriad of hidden treasures in Singapore's neighbourhoods. Many of our successful craftsmen built their crafts and businesses in the ethnic precincts that are now an important bastion of Singapore's heritage. We hope the personal stories will connect and inspire visitors to explore these precincts in Singapore," said Ms Choo Huei Miin, Director, Visitor Experience & Capability Development, STB. (www.yoursingapore.com/about-singapore/traveller-information/tourism-centre.html)

... LIKE A LOCAL

Fancy exploring popular Singapore neighbourhoods such as Tiong Bahru and Joo Chiat just like a local? How about chancing on hidden attractions like the swimming pool at Changi Airport? Or even discovering original Singapore souvenirs by local independent brands?

With the recently launched **Live like a Local** hub, travellers can whisk themselves off the beaten path with things to see, do, eat and drink in Singapore. The customised microsite hosted on TripAdvisor saw Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and TripAdvisor joining forces to promote the quirky and lesser known side of Singapore. Working for the first time with a National Tourism Organisation, TripAdvisor has incorporated user reviews and recommendations from its local experts, to offer specially-curated content for travellers, through inspiring and engaging stories. (www.tripadvisor.com.au/SingaporeLiveLikeALocal)

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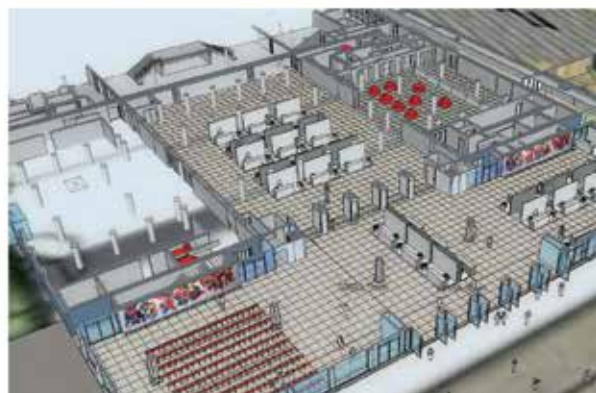
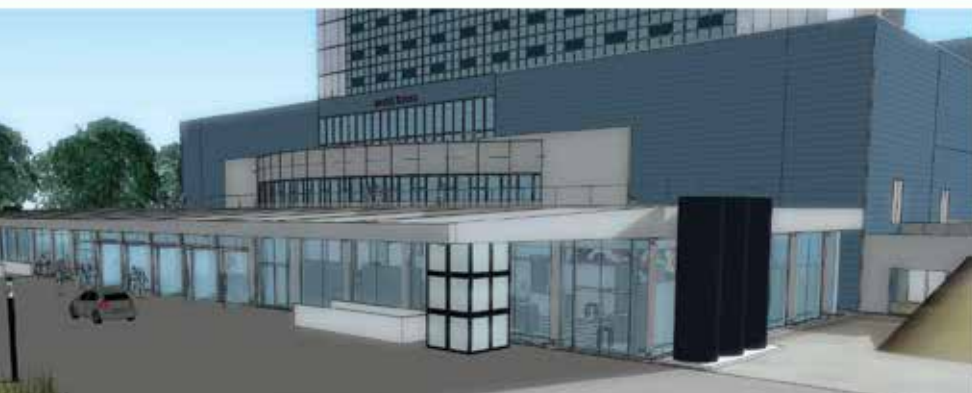
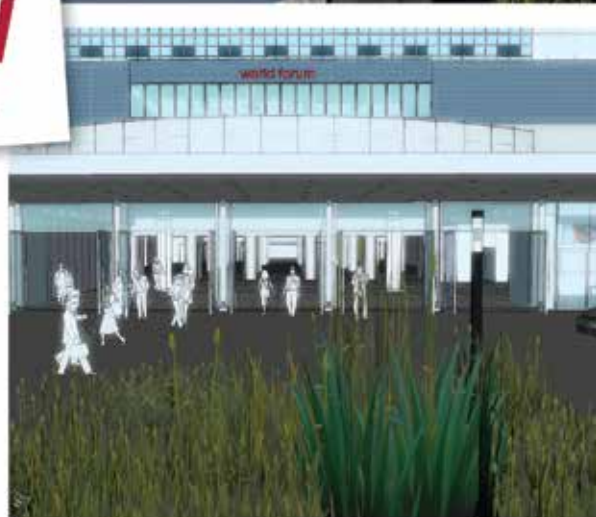
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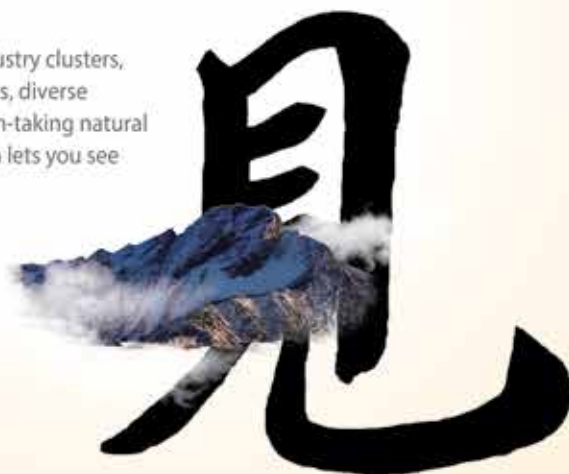
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* Photo courtesy of Tourism and Travel Department, New Taipei City Government



Bongeunsa Temple, overlooking COEX in Seoul



Busan International Film Festival

WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT KOREA

Playing a pivotal role in the global economy, home to LG, Hyundai, Samsung, Kia et al., and an array of international chain hotels, extensive convention facilities and architectural wonders old and new, Korea offers a wealth of options to association planners.

South Korea provides the optimal meeting environment through its geographic advantage as Asia's hub, and vast transportation network connecting to every corner of the world. 1/3 of the world's population are within a 3.5 hour flight from Korea, including Japan, Russia and China, and 88 airlines link 183 cities globally with a direct flight into the country.

If everyone is impressed by Seoul, an aspirational city with a modern landscape and high tech infrastructure - COEX offers a comprehensive congress and exhibition space with two onsite hotels - what sets Korea apart is its diverse but equally attractive regional cities.

Incheon, including **Songdo**, offers facilities for events at the airport such as the Grand Hyatt Incheon with two Ballrooms and 11 other event rooms, hospitality suites and outdoor spaces. **Songdo**, nicknamed the sustainable city of the future, and, is just 20 mins from Incheon International airport by road, making this ideal for meetings, as well as those looking to invest in Korea.

Daejeon is the R&D hub in Korea – City of Technology & Science, home to the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology - KAIST, Samsung Research at Daedeok Innopolis, and a member of the

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS IN KOREA

- 2010 G20 Seoul Summit
- 2013 World Energy Congress
- 2014 ITU Plenipotentiary
- 2015 World Water Forum
- 2016 Rotary International Seoul Convention

Science Alliance¹. The convention centre DCC, has a capacity for 2,857.

Daegu, the medi-city and birth place of Samsung, was also the textile industry of Korea until manufacture moved to China, and still the Korean Fashion Industry's main hub. EXCO can handle 7,900, and should you need overspill, the World Water Forum this summer utilised nearby Gyeongju and HICO to ensure 40,000 delegates were well housed.

Korea's second city and the world's fifth largest sea port, **Busan** is an Asian hub for marine and shipping, with major manufacture just up the coast in Ulsan. It also keenly keeps a toe in the creative industries as host to the International Film Festival. BEXCO (capacity 9,822) offers state of the art facilities and the Busan cinema offers a mixture of interior spaces and outdoor spaces, for up to 4,000 people.

Gwangju, the birthplace of a modern democratic movement in Korea, is also the arts hub of Korea, excellent for Humanities, Arts, Agriculture and home to Chonnam National University. The KCC holds just under 5,000 pax and the new Asia Culture Centre offers a range of indoor and outdoor space, exhibition areas and a 1,200 pax theatre.

Last but not least is **Jeju**, a resort Island, strong on agriculture and a smart Grid Test bed (Smart Grid is the basis for a low carbon, green growth strategy), and ideal for high level meetings that have synergy with their industries or wish to keep their delegates immersed and engaged on this delightful sub-tropical island. ICC Jeju offers a range of spaces and views over the sea.

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¹ These cities have been identified as having synergy in Science and Technology for key association congresses and meetings.

All photos courtesy of Korea Tourism Organisation

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Studio City Macao

POSTCARDS FROM MACAO

Some people are quickly labeling what’s going on over in Macao as a kind of “hotel madness”. If it’s correct that the city likes to see things big, it’s also correct that brand-new infrastructure developments are very handy for association planners who now have a wealth of choices to organise meetings. In this respect, Studio City Macao and St. Regis Macao are the latest addition to Macao’s already fascinating portfolio.

STUDIO CITY MACAO

Set to be Asia’s first leisure resort to integrate television and film production facilities, retail, gaming and hotels, Studio City Macao has just opened last October. Situated close to the Lotus Bridge immigration point connecting Hengqin Island and a future station-point for the Macao Light Rapid Transit, in Macao’s glitzy Cotai Strip, the peninsula’s answer to the Vegas Strip, it includes four hotels, complete with meeting space: Ritz-Carlton, W Hotel, Marriott Hotel and Tang Hotel, as well as flexible to organise meetings of any size or format.

IN MACAO, BRAND-NEW INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS ARE VERY HANDY FOR ASSOCIATION PLANNERS WHO NOW HAVE A WEALTH OF CHOICES TO ORGANISE MEETINGS

With its faux Art Deco design, the giant \$3.2 billion casino apes the golden age of Hollywood in all the signature ways

– glitzy gambling floors, movie-themed entertainment options, and last but not least, a Ferris wheel built to look like a gigantic 35 mm film reel, joining 1,600 hotel rooms divided between the “Celebrity Tower” and the “Star Tower”.

ST. REGIS MACAO, COTAI CENTRAL

As the travel industry becomes more and more invested in China, luxury brand St. Regis Hotels & Resorts is gearing up for its seventh hotel in Greater China: the St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central. Designed for entrepreneurial and business travelers, as

well as luxury-minded travelers and families, The St. Regis Macao, which is due to open in December this year, will feature 400 guest



St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central

rooms and suites and reflect traditional Chinese and Portuguese elements Macao is indeed Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China today, but it was also a former Portuguese colony.

In addition to a signature restaurant and bar, the Iridium Spa, and an outdoor swimming pool featuring a 2,457 square-meter deck and private cabanas, the St. Regis Macao will boast extensive meeting and banquet space. The biggest meeting room, the 600 square-metre Astor Ballroom, will seat 570 people. There will also be five smaller meeting rooms, two boardrooms, and an exclusive VIP meeting room - all named after goods found on the Silk Road, a legendary ancient trade network.

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KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE

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In just over a decade, the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (the Centre), which opened in June 2005, has established itself as Malaysia's premier convention venue and one of the leading meetings destinations in the Asia-Pacific region. Its success can be attributed to a technologically-advanced and purpose-built facility, strong industry relationships and a highly knowledgeable and professional team committed to the delivery of flexible, innovative and value-add solutions to clients across the board.

Operating in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual landscape such as Malaysia has also been integral to the Centre's success and a key point of difference. "We are fortunate to be in a country with such a rich cultural heritage. This provides both the perfect setting for a kaleidoscope of unique experiences and a myriad of holiday options for delegates, and the impetus for us to innovate or craft offerings that ensure clients receive a truly unique Malaysian experience when hosting events at the Centre," says General Manager Alan Pryor.

The Centre's complimentary **Cultural Showcase** is a fitting example. A firm favourite with international delegates and visitors, the showcase is part of its RM100,000 (€21,000) *Conventions Value-Add Programme*.

A presentation of eight Malaysian arts and crafts - batik painting, basket weaving, wood carving, songket weaving, pewter smithing, henna painting, Chinese calligraphy and the gamelan (traditional Malay orchestra), the **Cultural Showcase** gives foreign delegates a snapshot of the country's rich and diverse cultural heritage without having to leave

the facility. "Interactive and participative, the **Cultural Showcase** is a great convenience for delegates with limited time to visit attractions or undertake pre- and post-tours," explains Pryor.

OPERATING IN A MULTI-ETHNIC, MULTI-CULTURAL AND MULTI-LINGUAL LANDSCAPE SUCH AS MALAYSIA HAS ALSO BEEN INTEGRAL TO THE CENTRE'S SUCCESS AND A KEY POINT OF DIFFERENCE

Moving forward, "we are also extending our 2014 prices for popular Day Conference Packages (DCPs) With a Difference, PlenaryOnCall, PlenaryHallOnCall and Banquets & Functions menus to the end of the first quarter next year (2016)," adds Pryor.

This is in addition to the latest value-add for DCPs which already include coffee break(s), lunch, 'Snack on Arrival', unrivalled IT and A/V support, free Wi-Fi and much more for half and full-day packages. Between now and 31 December 2015, Convention and Conference clients who confirm their bookings for three or more consecutive years will enjoy the previous year's **all-inclusive DCPs** rates as well as a 'special rebate' of 10% to 25% on venue hire, depending on event size.

Similarly, a new **À La Carte & Venue Hire Package** which gives clients a selection of coffee breaks and lunch options on a person basis offers confirmed bookings made for three or more consecutive years the benefit

of the previous year's rates and a 3% to 9% 'special rebate' on venue hire.

Another exciting development on the horizon is the Centre's expansion plans. Groundwork has started on the adjacent Lot 91 development with completion scheduled for 2018. The additional 10,000 sqm of flexible and multi-purpose space will mean more room to comfortably accommodate larger international association meetings and concurrent events, and for many current clients to grow their activities and/or events significantly.

For more information, visit www.klccconventioncentre.com.

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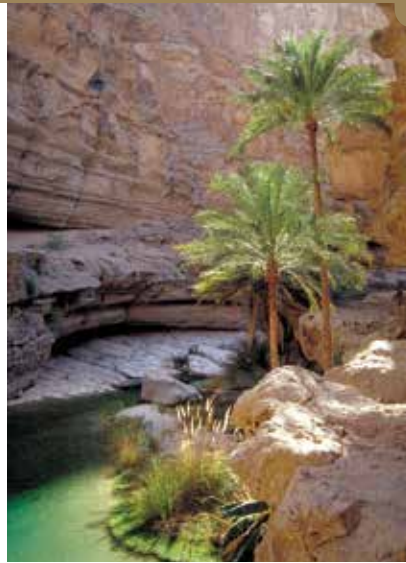
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OMAN

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The Sultanate of Oman has one of the most diverse environments in the Middle East. Its strengths? Its authenticity, diversity and hospitality. Oman is also a perfect location for conferences and events. The winning combination of excellent infrastructure, easy access from around the globe, and welcoming people can make any event a success.

LAND OF 1001 ADVENTURES

Refined hotels with state-of-the-art conference facilities and an increasing number of venues designed to cater to large numbers of delegates are being developed in Oman as it positions itself to become a leading MICE destination. For those who are looking for a special destination, there are unique opportunities to create, for instance, an intimate atmosphere of authentic Arabia: need a fort or a castle? Oman is the place. In the spectacular scenery of wadis and desert, traditional tents can be set up and make any event memorable.

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FASCINATING EXPERIENCE

The landscape of Oman is fantastic, from the fjords in the north in Musandam to the waters in Muscat. The combination of red sand dunes, green mountains and azure seas creates a fascinating experience. All the usual attractions of Oman - the stunning landscapes, the rich culture, the incredible array of historical sites and the various mix

of hotels will be appealing to MICE visitors and holiday-goers alike.

NATURAL BEAUTY

Muscat, the white capital city, is like a mirror of the past and the present. Archeological sites, ancient forts and museums alternate with contemporary buildings like the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and the Royal Opera House. Muscat is a symbol of the rich culture of all Oman.

The desert occupies seventy percent of Oman. But rest assured: it is anything but

boring or inaccessible. On the contrary, the desertic landscape is rich and varied, with impressive sand dunes and rocky formations. In addition, a journey through Oman's desert offers the opportunity to get acquainted with the daily life of the hospitable Bedouins.

Oman's coastline is 3165 km long and characterized by quiet beaches, bays and

high cliffs. Not far from Muscat International Airport, there are beautiful beaches and high-end hotels. The Musandam peninsula, in the north, is known for its spectacular fjords. In the south, near Salalah, you have banana plantations, frankincense trees and tropical beaches.

The mountain landscape of Oman is impressive. The peaks of the Al Hajar Mountains are more than 3,000 meters high, making spectacular panoramas and unique landscapes, ideal for outdoor activities. There are also picturesque villages on the cliffs and in the valleys, where fruits like dates, apricots and pomegranates are cultivated.

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Aerial View of the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre



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With the highly anticipated opening of Phase One of the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) in early 2016, the Sultanate of Oman will be placed front and centre on the world stage.

Oman is a land of immense beauty and culture, famed for its outstanding hospitality and friendly people. A symbol of tolerance and neutrality and an oasis of stability and tranquillity, the Sultanate often acts as a bridge between international adversaries.

SAFE HAVEN

A safe haven for visitors from around the world, the latest security and safety statistics from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Report placed Oman at an impressive 9th position, out of 141 countries and thanks to its virtually crime free environment, as well as its economic and legal transparency, Oman is known as the peace-maker of the Arabian Gulf.

A unique and irresistible destination with increasing delegate interest, Oman's tremendous offer has been endorsed by numerous accolades. It was recently ranked seventh in the world for Quality of Life by Numbeo.com, the world's largest database of user-generated content on cities and countries. The New York Times named Oman as one of the top 52 places in the world to visit in 2015 and the Sultanate was the number one

destination for 2015, according to the global travel industry website skift.com.

Such is the charm of Oman that many visitors choose to stay on and make the country their home, amongst them former American Ambassador Richard Baltimore III: *"When my period ended in 2006, I was here with my father, my wife and our daughters. We reflected and decided there was no rush to leave. This is a very, very safe country - a beautiful and welcoming country."* Ambassador Baltimore's views are echoed by those of Salim Al Maamari, Director General of Tourism Promotion, Ministry of Tourism: *"Oman has been famous throughout history for its hospitality and is known worldwide for its safety and cleanliness. This is what differentiates us from other destinations, not only in the region, but in the whole world."*

ICONIC VENUE

Within this stable environment, the OCEC has been purposefully designed and sustainably built to meet the complex and evolving needs of the global meetings and events industry. Its exceptional assets include: 22,000 square metres of superb

column-free exhibition space spanning five halls; ten outstanding hospitality suites; a spectacular 3,200 seat lyric-style tiered auditorium; another elegant 450 seat theatre; two lavish ballrooms that can be divided into a number of self-contained event spaces and a further 13 meeting rooms; to collectively offer over 55 meeting space options.

This world-class events hub is the centrepiece of Oman's business development programme, supported by the Sultanate's immense intellectual capital and its growing reputation for education, research, innovation and entrepreneurship. Acknowledged as the most exciting emerging convention and exhibition destination, and backed by fully integrated transport, logistics and communications infrastructure, the OCEC will attract over 200,000 visitors in its first year of operation.

To book an appointment for your next event or for more information, please visit stand K50 at ibtm world or email Gillian Taylor on gtaylor@omanconvention.com.

WHERE INFRASTRUCTURE MEETS INNOVATION

The regional commercial hub and gateway between East and West, Dubai is a city built on innovation and infused with opportunities. The city's diverse knowledge base and community of trained professionals make Dubai the ideal location for association conferences, corporate meetings and incentive events. Direct access from over 260 destinations worldwide, an array of venues, over 93,000 hotel rooms in all categories and numerous exciting activities in and around Dubai make this city the most remarkable destination for successful business events.



Dubai Business Events - The Official Convention Bureau
Tel: +971 600 55 5559, Email: askdbel@dubaitourism.ae, www.dubaibusinessesevents.ae

visitdubai.com





Sikka Art Fair in Al Fahidi

WHY ASSOCIATIONS MEET IN DUBAI

Helping associations set up in Dubai and opening them to the Middle East community is all what the Dubai Association Centre is about. An initiative designed to facilitate the licensing of associations, whether regional or international, the Centre has now launched an Ambassador's Programme, aiming to work with senior Association Executives to promote the Centre, engage with other associations and exchange knowledge.

ANNUAL SELECTION

Dubai Association Centre has identified prominent business personalities who have been leading associations in the region. Ambassadors include David Macadam, CEO, MECSC-ICSC Middle East & North Africa, Waleed Refaay, Managing Director, SPEMENA & India, Faris Abouhamad, Chairman & World President, IAA, Worldwide, Mohamed Mezghani, Deputy Secretary General, UITP, France, Hussein Ghattas, President, IIBA, United Arab Emirates, Dr. Wael Abdulrahman Almahmeed, President, GHA, United Arab Emirates.

These Ambassadors will be in charge of creating public awareness about the centre, representing DAC internationally at events and exhibitions, and actively participating in its activities.

"They are selected on an annual basis through mutual consent of the DAC Steering Committee," says Hassan Al Hashemi, a member of the DAC's Executive Committee and vice president of International Relations for the Dubai Chamber. *"These individuals should be board member, chairperson, CEO or*

managing director of an association, preferably licensed by the center, with past experience in business development, strategy and

Association Centre (DAC), currently with 12 members currently, offers assistance for the establishment of international

DUBAI'S AMBASSADORS WILL BE IN CHARGE OF CREATING PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE CENTRE, REPRESENTING DAC INTERNATIONALLY AT EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS, AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN ITS ACTIVITIES

pioneers in their field." Al Hashemi further states that this is just the first of many initiatives and is in line with DAC's mission.

12 CURRENT MEMBERS

Under a memorandum of understanding (MoU) which was signed in 2014, the Dubai

non-profit, professional associations and trade bodies in Dubai. Once set up, the associations have access to the UAE and GCC markets, as well those in the wider Middle East, Africa and Asia. This allows for a formal environment where associations can form a membership-based community or open a regional representative office to conduct business in the UAE and beyond, the Middle East region being a relatively untapped market for international organisations.

LATEST WINS FOR DUBAI

- Neuromarketing World Forum 2016
- World Steel Association Conference 2016
- Amway India Leadership Seminar 2017
- World Congress of Acute Heart Failure 2017
- 13th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Wetland 2018
- International Conference on Medical Regulation 2018

To learn more about how to access services related to business event development, destination expertise, convention planning, attendance building and onsite event servicing, visit dubaibusinessesvents.ae, call +971 6005 55559, or email askdbe@dubaitourism.ae



PLAN YOUR MEETING IN RIGA!

Let's be honest. Riga and Latvia are not - yet!- the obvious destinations in our industry. But, still, if you are looking for a new and trendy city in an emerging country for your future meeting(s), there are a number of reasons why you should consider Riga and Latvia. Let's what they are!

Affordable rates, excellent value for money, new infrastructure, easy accessibility and connections from more than 80 destinations in Europe by air, safe and compact character making commuting and transfers very comfortable... reasons are actually legion to come to Riga! In the past, the city has proved its capacities by hosting various high level meetings during the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union - it indeed hosted more than 200 official events along many other conferences.

And if you need help, MEET RIGA, the official convention bureau, will provide valuable information to associations and meeting planners. Whether you search for a reliable supplier or an unusual venue, they will provide impartial advice and have a very efficient website - www.MeetRiga.com - designed just for you.

MEETINGS FACILITIES AND MORE...

Riga offers more than 80 different styles and sizes of hotels: most of them have been recently renovated and always offer affordable rates (inclusive of all taxes, with free

But note that Riga not only offers conference hotels – it also boasts outstanding venues, unusual sites or academic facilities, which are suitable for conferences and congresses.

WHETHER YOU SEARCH FOR A RELIABLE SUPPLIER OR AN UNUSUAL VENUE, MEET RIGA WILL PROVIDE IMPARTIAL ADVICE AND HAVE A VERY EFFICIENT WEBSITE

WiFi throughout the hotel... and delightful buffet breakfasts!). Large conferences and international association congresses can be hosted in the largest conference hotel in the Baltics - Radisson Blu Hotel Latvia, which offers 18 meeting rooms and 571 guest rooms. Or if you have a seminar or board meetings, there are a vast choice of smaller hotels, which will offer more intimacy and a real sense of exclusivity.

AND THAT'S NOT IT!

Riga won't rest on its laurels, as it continues to develop its meetings infrastructure. One of the leading airports in the Baltics, Riga International Airport, has been extended by a Northern Pier, enhancing the comfort of travellers upon their arrival to and departure from the country.

The accommodation options will also be enriched by the addition of at least for new hotels due to open in 2016. For example, the Pulmann Riga Old Town hotel will offer 160 guest rooms and 6 meeting halls, while the Kempinski Riga Hotel will open with a premium location next to the Latvian National Opera house, offering 136 comfortable guest rooms and numerous meeting halls. Last but not least is the beautiful, brand-new Wellton Minsterija Hotel.

All in all, if you are looking for a new, affordable, reliable and safe destination to host your upcoming meeting, why not to consider Riga! Rates there are competitive even without subvention programmes... Should there be anything else to add?

For more information, please visit www.MeetRiga.com or contact:
Aigars Smiltans, Marketing Director
Meet Riga
meet@liveriga.lv
T. +371 2232 0416



MEET RĪGA



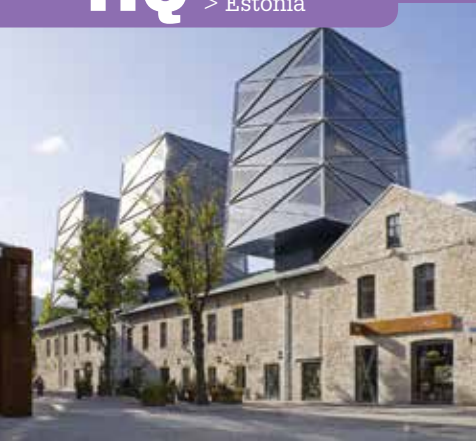
Affordable and reliable Riga – perfect destination for the MEETings!

Why choose the Latvian capital to host your next MEETing?

Quite simple, Riga is affordable, reliable, safe, diverse, compact, modern, businesslike, delightful and easy to reach!

We look forward to MEETing you: stand D20 at IBTM WORLD Barcelona 2015

www.MeetRiga.com



ESTONIA

Northern Europe's Undiscovered Gem

It's no secret Estonia is still a relatively undiscovered country. So why not organise a conference there and you're sure participants will discover an exotic, new destination that's full of surprises, from the historic, fairytale charm of Tallinn's Old Town to the natural beauty of the country's primeval forests and rugged seacoast.

What first strikes visitors in Estonia is its historic ambience. Imagine indeed strolling past Medieval walls and gates, Gothic churches, curious little lanes lit with old-fashioned lamps! But don't get mistaken: Estonia's cities are also surprisingly modern, with the latest high-tech conveniences always at hand. It's this very combination of old and new that gives Estonia its unique flavour.

BUZZING TALLINN

The capital, Tallinn, is best known for its unforgettable, UNESCO-listed Medieval Old Town, a fairytale neighborhood of cobblestone streets, gabled houses, picturesque lanes and Gothic churches. Here culturally-minded visitors can explore a vast range of museums - the maritime Seaplane Harbour is quite enticing! - churches, handicraft workshops... and many more!

Thanks to the city's rapid development as a travel destination, it's now home to dozens of new, top-quality, business-class hotels and conference facilities that offer the latest in comfort and technical capability. Tallinn has around 7,200 hotel rooms in all, and a good mix of 3- to 5-star hotels can be found in the city centre, providing excellent access

to the larger conference venues such as Solaris and the Estonia Theatre.

Tallinn has lately been among one of Europe's fastest-growing conference destinations, particularly for small and medium-sized events. As word has spread, the city has begun attracting large conferences as well - it recently had a record-breaking year, holding three events in the '1,000 participants and over' category.

THE CITIES IN ESTONIA ARE BUILT ON A VERY HUMAN SCALE, WITH MAJOR HOTELS, EVENT VENUES, SIGHTS, RESTAURANTS AND SHOPPING CONCENTRATED THE SAME CENTRAL AREA, ALL WITHIN EASY WALKING DISTANCE.

Naturally, a city like this offers some unforgettable venues for social events and receptions. In addition to historic spots like the opulent Town Hall and the towering ruins of the Pirita Monastery, there are more modern choices like the stylish, Kumu art museum, the Tallinn TV Tower, which has the highest viewing platform in the Nordic region, and even a Stalin-era airport terminal.

COMPACT & CLOSE

Distances in Estonia are conveniently short. After landing at any of the international

airports, delegates can be in their respective city centres in a matter of minutes. The cities themselves are built on a very human scale, with major hotels, event venues, sights, restaurants and shopping concentrated the same central area, all within easy walking distance.

In Tallinn, for instance, the city centre is just a 10-minute drive from the airport. This is a city where nobody wastes time in traffic or has to figure out a complicated metro system. If your meeting is 10 minutes from your hotel, that's considered a long walk. An hour in a coach will take you to the heart of Estonian countryside. Three hours

will take you to the opposite end of the country.

As to accessibility, getting to Estonia is easy. Many European cities are less than two hours away by air. Tallinn is only 1 hour from Stockholm and Copenhagen and 2 hours from Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin and Frankfurt. Oh and did we mention the excellent value for money? Most planners find it cheaper to organise a meeting in Estonia than in Central Europe for instance - a real added value it is!

Case Study

37th Euroheat & Power Congress in Tallinn

Head of Operations, Communications & Events at Euroheat & Power, Silke Schlinnertz explains what makes Tallinn a great event destination, after the success of the 37th Euroheat & Power Congress in Estonia.

Could you briefly describe the Euroheat & Power Congress?

Organised by Euroheat & Power (EHP), the international association of District Heating and Cooling (DHC) and Combined Heat and Power (CHP), the congress, a biannual event, discusses major issues of importance for European and Global District Energy sectors, in technical and business areas, from resource assessment and innovative technological design to market and policy developments. The 37th edition of the Congress was held in Tallinn in April 2015, at the Original Sokos Hotel Viru, bringing together 301 key leaders in the field and providing all attendees with an in-depth look into the current status of District Energy.

Why did you decide to hold it in Tallinn?

The Estonian Power and Heat Association and the Estonian Convention Bureau were able to highlight the key strengths of Tallinn and the local support as well as the programme in the bid book sent. EHP board members believed that Tallinn would make a big contribution to the Congress and were excited to find out more about the city, the country and to meet with their peers from all parts of Europe; Besides, we hadn't organised the Congress in a Northern European country for a long time...

What was the feedback of the participants? How helpful was the Estonian Convention Bureau?

The feedback from the participants was absolutely great. Satisfaction results of

the congress evaluation questionnaire showed over 90% of the participants were "Very Satisfied" and "Satisfied"! A highlight was the evening dinner at the Seaplane Harbour: it was just amazing!

Tallinn is definitely a hidden gem, and for sure one of the most exciting European cities to hold a Congress in! Once the Estonian Convention Bureau won the bid, they continued to support our Events Team, whether with information on activities, suggestions on venues for dinners, etc. – they were really fast answering our requests and provided useful contacts. As organisers, we were delighted with the service and the professionalism shown by the whole staff at the Original Sokos Hotel Viru Conference Centre, they were personable, helpful, knowledgeable and nothing was ever too much trouble. We would have no hesitation in recommending Tallinn and Estonia as a congress destination!

ESTONIAN CONVENTION BUREAU AT YOUR SERVICE

Anyone planning an event in Estonia will have the added bonus of assistance from the Estonian Convention Bureau. Established in 2008, the ECB is a non-profit organisation made up of the top players in the industry and is your partner for putting together any conference, meeting or other corporate function in the country.

CONTACT

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WELCOME TO NANTES

An amazingly creative destination

In Nantes, innovation means audacity and imagination. The city revels in originality and boosts inspiration. Amazingly creative, Nantes has become an unmissable congress destination.

Located in Western France, Nantes is two hours away by plane from most European capitals and boasts top quality accommodation (8700 hotel rooms on offer). The birthplace of Jules Verne, Nantes unveils stunning venues, a giant elephant walking in the city centre, gala dinners held among huge odd creatures.

Nantes' convention centre called La Cité Nantes Events Center is situated at the heart of the city, opposite the TGV train station, 2 hours from Paris and 20 minutes from the international airport. With 3 auditoriums (450, 800 and 2,000 seats), 30 meeting rooms, 6,000 sqm of flexible space, state-of-the-art facilities and eco-responsible services (ISO 26000), La Cité is a venue that lives up to the industry's high international standards.

An economic tool of global exposure, La Cité has developed closed relationships and signed partnership charters with the local competitiveness clusters to stage international events. As a result of this strategic orientation towards international associations, the destination now ranks 176th worldwide (2014).

Since 2010, La Cité Nantes Events Center and the city of Nantes have been actively engaged in welcoming international associations and hosting conventions. They have adopted a Charter for hosting events with a view to making life easier for corporate event organisers. Social and environmental responsibility underlies all the commitments set out in the Charter. Through sustainability and collective commitments,

two overarching values that are consistently demonstrated towards event organisers and delegates, Nantes and La Cité clearly stand.

Not surprisingly, Nantes was awarded European Green Capital 2013 and La Cité became the only French congress centre to have successfully achieved the "Gold" AIPC Quality Standard. In addition, the new Convention Bureau run by the Nantes Saint Nazaire Development Agency is dedicated to making Nantes and Saint-Nazaire an international, visible and attractive region.

La Cité Nantes Events Center
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 Nantes Convention Bureau Area

La Cité
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The men and women at La Cité bring passion and commitment to your events - conventions, corporate meetings, exhibitions and entertainment shows. They work in close partnership with you to make each event unique and inventive and each experience richer.

BRINGING YOUR EVENT TO LIFE...

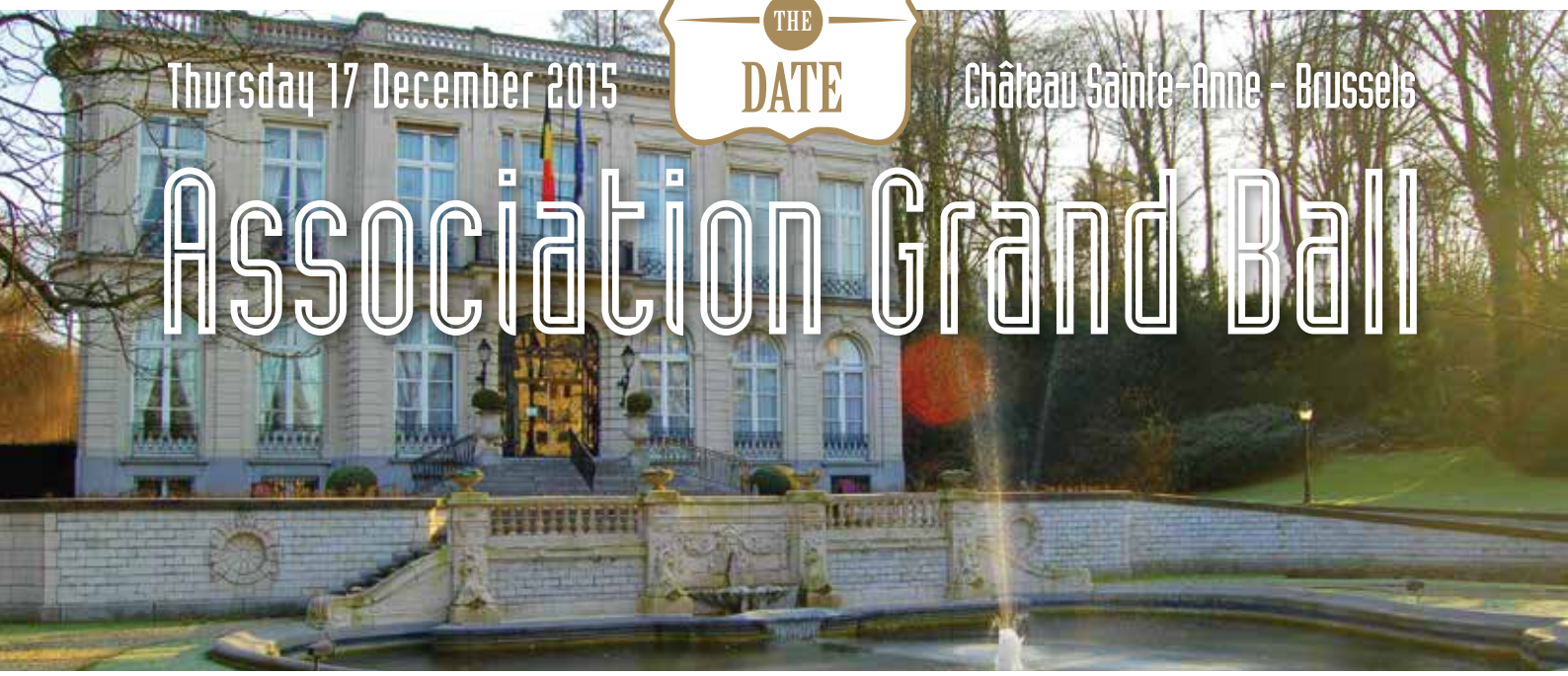


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LOOKING BACK AT THE THIRD FRANCE MEETING HUB

Alsace is the place

In the meetings industry today, it's mandatory to remain competitive as a destination. France has clearly understood this and organised, for the third consecutive year, France Meetings Hub, but this time in Alsace. At the invitation of Atout France, about 120 hosted buyers from more than 30 countries met, conversed and networked with French professionals for a few days in October. The aim? To promote the French regions among international business tourism professionals and give them a taste of Alsace!

Report Rémi Dévé

INCENTIVES AND WORKSHOPS

Organised by Atout France in partnership with Air France-KLM and the official support of Access Alsace, France Meeting Hub was all about educational tours, incentives and workshops. If the general focus was on Alsace and its many attractions, meeting planners could also meet with a few other suppliers coming from all over France, from Cannes to Calvados, from Paris to Lille, both casually and formally, at **Strasbourg Convention & Exhibition Centre**, currently undergoing a massive refurbishment/extension.

What made France Meeting Hub unique for participants was the chance to discover three different MICE destinations from Alsace: **Mulhouse**, the creative, **Colmar**, along the famous wine road, and **Strasbourg**, the European gem. Highlights of the trip included the gala dinner at the **Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art** in Strasbourg, a visit of the **Council of Europe**, and some fun incentives at the

Château de Pourtalès (perfect for this kind of activities for up to 450 people). All in all, there were many opportunities for exhibitors and meeting planners to get together in a relaxed but professional atmosphere.

Isabel Pelletier, from Madrid-based EventsME, put it like this: *"The format of the event is really ideal. Opportunities to network are legion, and if you want a more focused perspective, the workshops work quite well. Besides, the whole trip is really well organised and personally I had no idea that Alsace was so beautiful. The cruise on the Ill river in Strasbourg was just breathtaking!"*

OBJECT OF ATTENTIONS

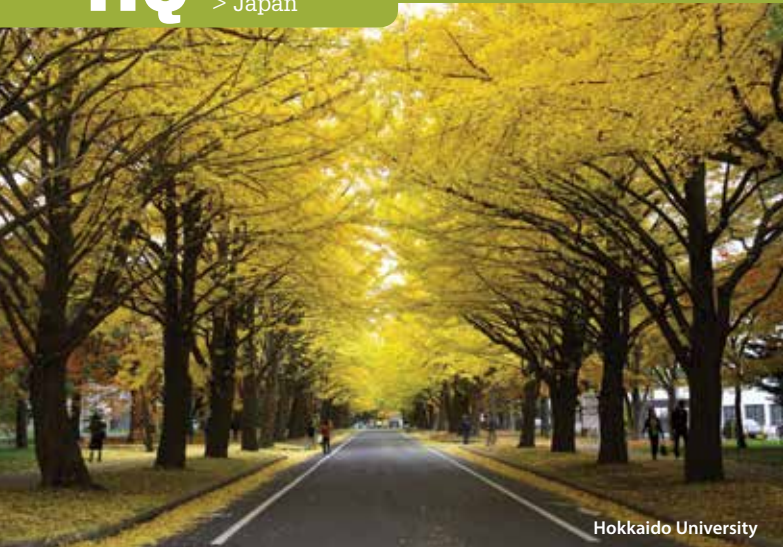
Alsace, as a whole, was understandably the object of many attentions from the part of the organisers. Pre-tours were organised in **Colmar**, **Mulhouse** and **Ribeauvillé** to make guests discover what the region has up its sleeves. Participants particularly enjoyed a private dinner at the **Cité du Train** in Mulhouse, a unique museum retracing

European rail history and future, and the **Museum Unterlinden** in Colmar, which will re-open in December after a top-to-bottom refurbishment. I personally enjoyed two new, very different venues in Strasbourg: **Shadok**, a digital factory which addresses the issues raised by the digital revolution and which can also serve as a venue for a dinner or a trendy cocktail, and **Villa Quai Sturm**, a beautifully renovated mansion complete with high ceilings and stucco friezes which was once a German casino!

This overall operation aims to strengthen the position of France in the professional meetings and events sectors. With regard to the feedback I heard from participants altogether, this was clearly a success and the France Meeting and Convention Board of Atout France can be proud of their efforts.

More info on France as a business events destination

www.rendezvousenfrance.com
www.atout-france.fr



Hokkaido University



Moerenuma Park - Glass Pyramid

SAPPORO: NATURAL – CONVENIENT – SMART

Ranked 3rd in Japan, following Tokyo and Kyoto, in the 2014 ICCA rankings, Sapporo has surely been proving itself as an attractive destination for both world's travelers and meeting organizers.

TRAVEL TIME MATTERS

Multiple connections, long hours wasted at the airports, ages to get to the hotel, well, definitely not in Sapporo. The city can easily be reached directly from major capitals in Asia, while it is only a 1.5 hour flight away from Tokyo – the world's busiest air route with over 70 flights per day. Once at Sapporo New Chitose Airport, the travel time between the airport and the city centre is only 37 minutes via rapid train. And just so you know, a food market filled with fresh local delicacies, Ramen noodles restaurants from all over Hokkaido, Japan's famous sweets avenue, not to forget a hot spring, will all be at the airport as well.

UNBEATABLE PRICES, AMAZING CHOICE

When it comes to meeting venues and hotels in the nation's most walkable city, the prices and options are unbeatable. All major convention facilities and hotels (over 20,000 rooms) are located within 1 km radius of Odori Park. A short 10-15 minute walk from the hotel to the meeting venue will be enough to start your day. And in case you are staging your meeting at Sapporo Convention Center, it is just a short 7 minute ride on subway from downtown. Speaking of cost, meeting space and room rates are about twice cheaper compared to Tokyo or other major cities in Japan.

UNIQUE IS GUARANTEED

Sapporo has been the front-runner of Japan's unique venues arsenal. Be it a gathering of about 50 to 200 pax, the Ski Jump Stadium at Okurayama or the Glass Pyramid at Moerenuma Park would definitely wow your guests. Sapporo Racecourse, a chic facility right outside of the city centre, could be a perfect option for a networking event or a gala for a group of 300. And if you need to go big, beer halls at the historical Sapporo Beer Garden will accommodate up to 1,000 guests.

SAPPORO'S UNIQUE AND RICH NATURAL ENVIRONMENT HAS A LOT TO OFFER WHEN IT COMES TO THE VALUE OF A MEETING

VALUE FOR MONEY

For the last couple of years, Sapporo has been seeing a dramatic increase in the attendance when it comes to participation from Asia-Pacific members. One example is the Asia Oceania Geosciences Society Annual Meeting, held last August, which hit its record attendance of 3,100 participants.

With academic institutions such as Hokkaido University, Sapporo Medical University and Rakuno Gakuen University leading in the fields of geosciences, organic chemistry, agriculture, forestry,

energy, medicine, pharma, animal behavior and veterinary sciences, Sapporo's unique and rich natural environment has a lot to offer when it comes to the value of a meeting. This collaboration of natural environment and the value of a meeting was particularly obvious when the participants of the 5th International Wildlife Management Congress 2015 together with the citizens put their forces together for a good cause – clearing out and cutting down thickets and tall grass along Toyohira River.

Sapporo's IT sector has also been developing strong recently, with various international IT meetings of all sizes increasing their appearances in the northern capital. This year's key gathering was W3C Technical Plenary / Advisory Committee Meetings Week, which attracted over 500 specialists from all over the world to Sapporo in October.

CONTACT

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www.meet-in-shanghai.net

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Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration



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