



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

Headquarters

FEB. 2018 - N°82

DEFINING FUTURE LEADERS

**EU GENERAL DATA PROTECTION
REGULATION (GDPR)**

**LEADERSHIP IN THE
ASSOCIATION
WORLD**

**SPECIAL EDITION
ASIA-PACIFIC**



MEETING MEDIA COMPANY // MEETINGS INDUSTRY PUBLISHERS - BIMONTHLY: MARCH // MAY // JUNE // SEPTEMBER // NOVEMBER // DECEMBER



Blue Mansion



Kek Lok Si Temple

TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD CHOOSE PENANG FOR YOUR MEETINGS



Pantai Kerachut



Indian Snacks Seller



Chingay Festival



Kapitan Keling Mosque



Assam Laksa



Setia SPICE Convention Centre



Majestic Theatre Penang



Penang Hill Railway

TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD CHOOSE PENANG FOR YOUR MEETINGS

Marrying business with authentically unfiltered experiences brought alive by its friendly people, vibrant culture, and rich heritage, Penang is a meeting planner's dream destination. With over 20,000 plenary capacity across four convention centres and 20,000 hotel rooms, the Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau welcomes you to meet at Penang.

1 - TREASURED HERITAGE

Home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of George Town and the largest collection of pre-war houses in Southeast Asia, Penang's potpourri of Asian cultures and world religions lends the destination a magical charm. Penang was once an important port city along the ancient spice trade, attracting the world to its doorstep. This saw the creation of a uniquely Penang experience, a living heritage in which Malay, Chinese, Indian and Eurasian live, trade and worship side-by-side, just in the way their forefathers did.

2 - THRIVING CULTURE

Embrace diversity and experience living traditions. This culture capital of Asia is home to multiple races including the Peranakan or Straits Chinese with its almost extinct legacy still thriving in Penang. Prepare to also be in awe of Penang's artistic omnipresence that can be seen in its traditional artisans and world-renowned street art culture. Every step you take on this land will expose different stories of Penang and its people.

3 - CHARMING TRADITION

Travel back in time and experience the Penang of a bygone era. While Penang of today is a bustling international metropolitan, some things have remained untouched. Amidst the high-rise super condos and world-famous heritage buildings are the workings of traditions and the way of living of pre-Independence Malaya.

4 - A LEGACY PRESERVED

Penang Island was once named the Prince of Wales Island after the heir to the British throne, while the settlement of George Town was created in honour of King George III. Indulge in Penang's rich colonial charm preserved in its award-winning heritage hotels and buildings. The legacy of Penang's prosperity from its days as a port city along the ancient spice trade and as the first British outpost in Southeast Asia is very much alive today in the halls and rooms of the opulent heritage mansions and pre-war buildings of George Town.

5 - ASIA'S FOOD CAPITAL

Delight your taste buds and experience fulfilment with Asia's great culinary traditions at Penang's street hawkers, coffee shops, hip cafes, mom-and-pop restaurants and fine dining establishments. Savour a dish of flat rice noodles with supple plump prawns fried in a charcoal-fired wok with homemade chilli paste, crunchy bean sprouts, cockles, scrambled eggs, and strips of fish cake - char kway teow. And to satisfy your sweet tooth, devour a bowl of ais kacang, a dessert of shaved ice drizzled with palm sugar syrup and topped with tropical fruits and ice cream!

6 - CONVENTION CENTRE OF THE FUTURE

Billed as the world's first and only hybrid solar-powered convention centre, the Setia SPICE Convention Centre is the latest addition to Penang's business events facilities. The state-of-the-art convention centre has the largest subterranean pillarless ballroom in

Asia, accommodating up to 8,000 delegates in theatre seating. With 13 function rooms to support international conventions and congresses, meeting planners can also utilise the 2,000-square-foot Grand Foyer and the sprawling 6-acre SPICE Roof Garden.

7 - EXTRAORDINARY VENUES

Penang hosted more than 2000 Business Events in 2017, with an estimated economic impact of USD 257 million. With a plethora of unique venues, convention hotels and centres, this Northern Malaysian state is fast rising as a star meetings destination in the region. Experience meetings set against the spectacular bird's eye view of Penang at the Rainbow Skywalk or revel in the splendour of one of the world's oldest rainforests with gala events at The Habitat Penang Hill and the award-winning Tropical Spice Garden.

8 - CONVENIENT CONNECTIVITY

Penang is directly accessible from 26 major regional airports, and over 200 local and international destinations via the Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong and Doha. Your guests can also travel to neighbouring islands, cities or countries if desired as Penang is located at the border of Thailand, or go island hopping at the Andaman Sea, a mere 3-hour ferry ride away.

9 - LUSH NATURE

Breathe in fresh air and experience mother earth. Escape to nature in Penang's many mystical gardens, nature parks and forest reserves. Take a leisurely stroll in the botanical gardens or trek through mountain trails. Watch dusky leaf monkeys and long-tailed macaques playing together, or look up to the sky for kingfishers, sea eagles and kites. Camp out in nature under the stars in Penang's national park, visit the Tropical Spice Garden and learn all about bugs at Entopia. Or conquer the 230m of The Habitat's Langur Way Canopy Walk, the only two-span ribbon bridge in the world, sitting 40m above the forest floor.

10 - MODERN CONVENIENCE

Complementary high-speed wireless internet virtually everywhere in Penang has not made the destination a digital nomad paradise, but also allows you to be connected to the world at all times. Getting around Penang is easy and cheap with a smart combination of public transportation and ride sharing services. Major credit cards are accepted at most retail, dining and tourist attractions, and English is widely spoken, followed by the Malay language, Mandarin, and many more.

LEARN MORE OF PENANG AND ITS
MANY EXPERIENCES UNFILTERED AT

WWW.PCEB.MY

or email INFO@PCEB.MY

“WHEN YOU SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE, WINNING ANY BID IS POSSIBLE” AN INTERVIEW WITH ASHWIN GUNASEKERAN, CEO OF PCEB

As Penang has been selected as the first Asian destination to host the World Seafood Congress in September 2019, HQ catches up with Ashwin Gunasekeran, CEO of Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) on what makes Penang special. *Katie Lau reports*

Congratulations on winning the bid for the World Seafood Congress in 2019. Why do you think Penang won?

Winning the bid in the second year of PCEB's formation, this success was only possible because of Team Penang. This is the significance and importance of having a destination team that speaks the common language and has profound understanding of the 'complement not competition' model that PCEB has adopted.

The Team Penang that formed the bid committee for World Seafood Congress 2019 included Malaysia's leading research institution and think tank, Penang Institute as the local host, the Penang State Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Health and Rural Development; and Penang State Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs. When all partners come together to speak the same destination language, winning any bid is possible.

As Penang has risen to become a leading second-tier meeting destination in the region in for Business Events, how do you position Penang among other Asian-Pacific cities?

The destination has what is known as the Penang Factor, which involves: heritage and culture, extraordinary, explosive choice of local gastronomy, and convenient connectivity (Ed: more details in the following article).

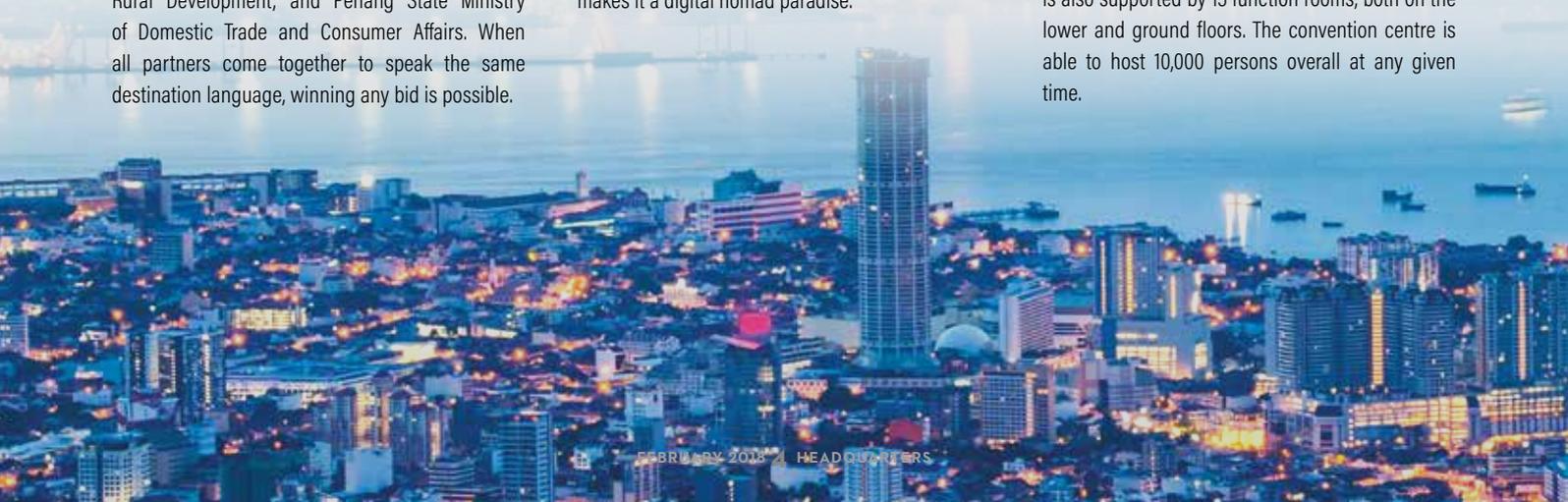
And of course, Penang speaks of a common language – hospitality. The friendly people of Penang are always ready to our visitors. Besides that, Penang is always equipped with complimentary high-speed wireless internet everywhere which makes it a digital nomad paradise.

We also consider Penang a bucket-list destination – a must-visit venue as it is a tropical destination that delivers an all-round Asian cultural and heritage experience.

PCEB carries out the 'Experiences Unfiltered' brand campaign that showcases Penang's various authentic and raw experiences in line with the experiential travel and meetings global trend.

What's new about Penang that meeting planners should know?

First and foremost, we have Setia SPICE Convention Centre, which is the first and only hybrid solar-powered convention centre in the world with the ballroom capacity of 8,000 pax theatre seating and is also supported by 13 function rooms, both on the lower and ground floors. The convention centre is able to host 10,000 persons overall at any given time.



There are a few unique venues that have recently opened in Penang that can be used for events like The Habitat Penang Hill. A world-class ecotourism site, The Habitat Penang Hill is the first of its kind site in Malaysia that aims to promote environmental consciousness and conservation awareness within tourism. The rainforest in which The Habitat is located is part of Penang's green lung and is among the world's oldest rainforests, dating 130 million years! Best of all, apart from functioning as an ecotourism attraction and sanctuary for all things nature, The Habitat also acts as a unique venue for hosting Business Events.

Another unique venue that is filled with lush greenery includes the Tropical Spice Garden, which is more than just a garden with venue spaces for meetings outside the usual congested room as well as for company team-building activities. They also have a cooking school that provides a comfortable and well-equipped kitchen facility enough for 10 pairs.

What are the biggest challenges you face as CEO of PCEB?

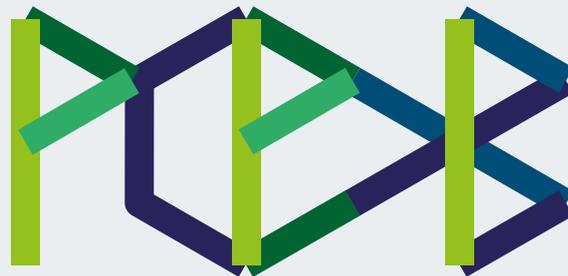
One of the biggest challenges involves the destination brand-building for Penang as a Business Events destination. Penang is known as an established choice destination for incentives, but we are a rising convention and association meetings destination. After doing research and seeing an increase in the number of events, the challenge is positioning the destination within the market, and reshaping the perception of Penang being a fun and leisure-only destination into that of Penang the international city with world-class meetings facilities. Nevertheless, this is a good challenge and it will lead to a lot of learning, growth and improvement.

What plans do you have for Penang in the future?

We are introducing a Penang expert or specialist programme and our Global Partner Programme in the second quarter of 2018. The Penang specialist programme is an initiative to reach out to interested individuals who share the same passion in the development of Penang and zealous towards promoting Penang as a first-choice-destination for Business Events. The Global Partner Programme on the other hand is an expansion from our Industry Partner Programme, where the applications will be opened and extended to interested registered Business Events players around the world interested in doing business in Penang.

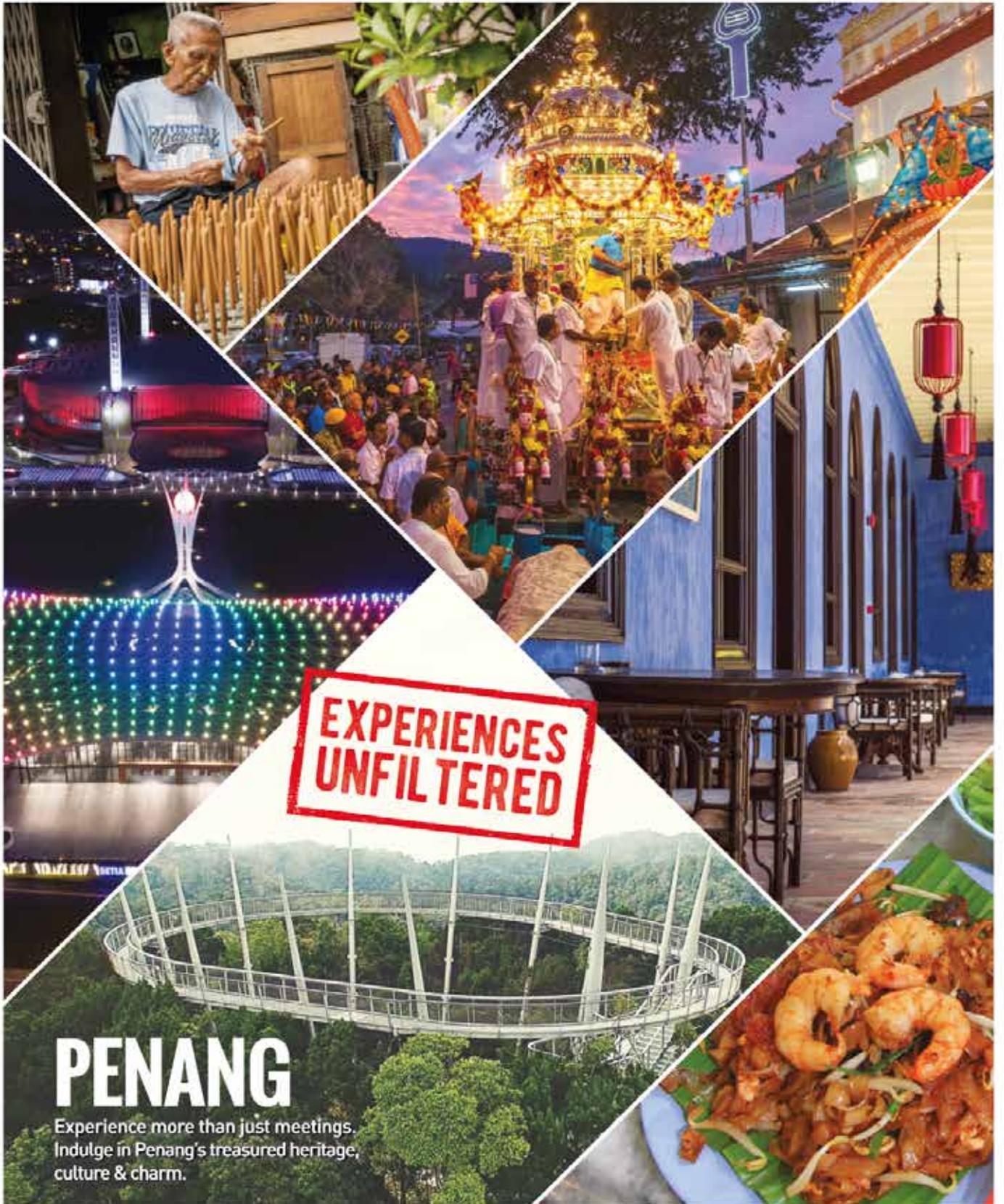
What does success look like for you?

Instead of saying what success looks like for me, I would like talk on what success look like to the destination. The success of a destination can be seen if there is a steady stream of investments and initiatives from the private sectors contributing to the development of more potential venues and facilities that grow the destination, which in this case refers to Penang.



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and the China Social Organization.

This is the first association management magazine in mainland China.
with the support of China Association for Non-Profit Organization (CANPO).

 **4 EDITIONS PER YEAR**
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65€ in Belgium / 75€ in the EU
95€ in the rest of the world

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GDPR: FEAR OF CHANGE?

MARCEL A.M. VISSERS

EDITOR IN CHIEF

HeadQuarters magazine

Are you ready for it? I am hearing this question everywhere I turn my head and its clearly raising doubt and insecurity among associations.

A new European regulatory framework for data protection - The GDPR or General Data Protection Regulation.

On 25 May 2018 the GDPR, the new European regulation for data protection, comes into effect. This will have obvious consequences for European marketeers and other communicators working with data of European consumers. The new regulation tightens the rules compared to the current Personal Data Protection rules but also imposes several new obligations.

In the end ... what is all the fuss about? I'll have to start by explaining the difference between 'fear' and 'concern' to help you understand that you don't really need to be concerned! Fear is a feeling you experience when something still has to occur. However, when you're concerned that something is generally already there. And that's definitely not so since the GDPR will not come into force before 25 May 2018. That's when Europe will show it's really serious about protecting citizens against the constant collection of data in view of influencing behaviour, irrespective of whether intentions are right or wrong. I would say that this is definitely a good thing. However, there is some concern because no one really knows how to handle this changing context nor what the consequences of the changes will be.

What if I don't interpret the new rules properly? What will that entail for me? You may remember that most of us went through the same turmoil when VAT was introduced in Europe. When do I have to charge VAT and when not? At that time many convention organisers were concerned about being fined or even convicted. All that belongs to the past now because in the end we were all able to manage the transition and most of the concern was probably not justified.

Reason: the authors of the new rules were probably not properly prepared for the introduction of the changes... and I am convinced

that the same will happen when the GDPR comes into force. Our regulators may have devised an ingenious system to better protect European consumers

and their personal data but the civil servants who have to put the new rules into place and verify their proper implementation will still have to acquire some field experience before getting to grips with the new regulatory situation. If you are in the line of fire of the GDPR I would not panic. It will not be unlike what happened when VAT was introduced. Just quietly prepare yourself. Make sure you're up to date and that your files are in order. No one will be waiting around the corner to convict you. All of us just have to learn more about it and get acquainted with it. Just as in the early days of VAT many big consultancies and legal cabinets are clamoring that you should be in touch with them because they already have all the answers. But if I were you I would wait a moment longer until the dust settles.



MORE STORIES ON WWW.MEETINGMEDIAGROUP.COM

1

AUSTRALIA'S NORTHERN TERRITORY LAUNCHES NEW BUSINESS EVENTS SUPPORT FUNDING

Conference planners considering Australia's Northern Territory for their next business event have been given even more reason to consider the destination, with the launch of a new scheme called the Northern Territory Business Events Support Fund.

Organisations can apply for financial assistance of A\$100 per delegate up to a maximum of A\$50,000 per event. Key criteria include the requirement for the eligible event to align with Northern Territory priority industry strength sectors and also that the majority of event participants travel there from interstate and beyond.

Support will also be weighted towards business events which align with the Territory's economic and social strengths which include health, agribusiness, land management, mining, renewable energy, education and defence.

WWW.NTCONVENTIONS.COM.AU

4

AIM GROUP INTERNATIONAL CERTIFIED AS ETHICAL TRUSTED PARTNER BY MEDTECH EUROPE

MedTech Europe, the European trade association representing the medical technology industry, certified AIM Group International as an Ethical MedTech Trusted Partner. Upon completion of a demanding three-step process, the Ethical Charter provided AIM Group a Trusted Partner logo valid for renewable periods of two years.

The Ethical Charter is a voluntary certification initiative for organisers of third-party educational events, proving the commitment of PCOs to the ethical standards and new rules included in the MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice. It also aims to facilitate the industry's support for independent medical education to organisations that are certified and who commit to comply with the Code when organising their events.

WWW.AIMGROUPEINTERNATIONAL.COM

2

CENTRAL HALL WESTMINSTER – THE FIRST UK VENUE TO LAUNCH GREEN TOURISM CARBON CALCULATOR

In January 2018, Central Hall Westminster announced the launch of a new carbon calculator with Green Tourism, designed to help organisers easily estimate the environmental impact of their event.

Central London's largest conferencing and events centre is the first UK venue to partner with Green Tourism for the groundbreaking initiative.

The calculator, devised from data provided by Green Tourism, will offer meeting and event planners a simple but effective way to estimate the carbon impact of their event. They can then undertake a carbon offset to reduce the environmental impact of the event. To assist event organisers, the carbon impact will be calculated by Central Hall's events team as a financial sum which will then be used to offset carbon elsewhere via a charitable donation.

The formula takes into account the size of the venue space versus the number of days an event is held. It takes into consideration the carbon associated with the venue itself and the energy and water used by the venue space being hired.

WWW.C-H-W.COM

5

POSITIVE NUMBERS FOR CONVENTION BUREAU ITALIA

The year begins full of promise for Italy and for the Convention Bureau Italia, the authoritative portal for access to the Destination for the international Meetings industry. This is evidenced by several indicators; the activities proposed by CBI, including the recent involvement in events such as the Global Forum and IAPCO Edge, and the membership representing over 1400 Italian companies.

The Members' network now stands at over 110. A very important addition to the membership is the Milanese company EventingMilan which has become effectively the city's convention bureau and also the Hilton Molino Stucky in Venice, the city's undisputed reference point. To these we can add the HNH chain, the Nicolaus Hotel in Bari and the Hotel Caesius Thermae and Spa Resort on Lake Garda.

WWW.CONVENTIONBUREAUITALIA.COM

3

THE ESTONIAN CONVENTION BUREAU CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

The Estonian Convention Bureau celebrated the success of its first decade of operation with a festive gathering of members and partners.

Held at the Tallinn Creative Hub, the January 24 event served to highlight the accomplishments achieved by the group since its founding in 2008, chief among them propelling Estonia into the ranks of Europe's best-known conference destinations.

"One key ingredient of our work has been connecting institutions from a wide variety of sectors and businesses – hotels, tour companies, venue operators, city governments, tourist boards and universities. Now they're all pulling together to promote the country under the Team Estonia brand, and the results speak for themselves," said ECB Managing Director Kadri Karu.

WWW.ECB.EE

6

LEBANON, FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

2017 was a very successful year for Lebanon. Not only had the country nearing 2 million visitors by the end of the year (11% increase compared to the previous year), but the country is amongst the top 10 trending destinations for 2018. With a constant need to diversify and revitalize their offer, tourism and meeting professionals are taking a keen interest in Lebanon.

Many professionals have already placed their trust in the destination with an average of 2,000 incoming MICE and 1,200 local events organized this year.

2017 also marked the set-up of VISIT LEBANON, the new agency in charge of promoting Lebanon worldwide and the creation of the Lebanese Convention Bureau dedicated to business tourism and events. Both organisations are backed by the Lebanon Ministry of Tourism with the aim of making the country the go-to place for worldwide meeting professionals.

WWW.VISIT-LEBANON.ORG



THE ANNUAL HEADQUARTERS ASSOCIATION GRAND BALL CONTINUES TO SHINE AT AVANT-GARDE VENUE



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

HQ Magazine took a break from the spectacular castle – a venue of choice for previous years – by hosting the 4th edition of Grand Ball this year at Atomium, one of Brussels' iconic landmarks that also serve as an avant-garde meeting venue with fantastic views of the city.

The exclusive event, which took place on January 18, gathered about 30 senior executives from Brussels-based associations and convention bureau representatives from Monaco, Finland, Helsinki, Vienna and Salzburg for an intimate evening of mingling and networking over a delicious buffet dinner with lovely live music by a talented duo.

Guests were also invited to take part in a challenging yet fun destination quiz. Mrs. Patricia Vanderplassen from European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA) managed to answer all the questions correctly and took home the well-coveted grand prize – a unique vase Goldene Gol by renowned designer and landscape architect Ronald van der Hilst.





WHAT MAKES A GOOD LEADER?

INTERVIEWS WITH ADONIS MEGGOS & PAUL VOSS

In this leadership issue, HQ asks two Brussels-based senior-level association executives to share their perspectives on leadership, despite their difference in age, profession and background.

With five years of experience in project management, ADONIS MEGGOS is a 25-year-old communications director of European Students Forum (AEGEE), founded in 1985 in Paris as a platform to strengthen mutual understanding among young Europeans with members in 40 countries.



Adonis Meggos

What is more important: being loved or respected? How would you describe the leadership style?

In a world where the social media is overruling our lives, being loved is rather a simple task and it's easy to fake it. Being respected, on the other hand, means that people support your values and efforts. A collective effort of an initiative with a strong leadership is probably the optimal solution when you set high standards and reward your group with excellent results.

What kind of a culture and environment do you wish to nurture in your organisation?

In our organisation we empower European students to take an active role in society. We create a space for dialogue and learning opportunities as well as act as representatives towards decision makers. My personal efforts have been focusing on making the timid voices heard no matter what their cultural background.

Your active members are millennials. How do you find working with them?

Millennials find social media highly appealing, which has been beneficial for promoting our events and projects. The diversity and accessibility of available communication tools also boosts the creativity and simplifies the participative role of our members.

What are the biggest challenges you face at work?

I must admit that addressing the developments of our organisation to each communication

channel we use hasn't been an easy task. The outstanding challenge has been the interference of undemocratic processes that certain members used in order to gain more power.

What is one lasting impact that you hope to leave on your organisation?

I hope that my actions within AEGEE motivate and encourage the upcoming young generation to take an active role in society with a strong voice and innovative suggestions for a united European future.

Which leader do you admire? Why?

A leader that I admire the most is Konstantinos Karamanlis, a former Prime Minister and President of Greece, for his pro-European values and efforts for my country.

What is your definition of success?

As Bill Bradley put it, "Ambition is the path to success. Persistence is the vehicle you arrive in".

With more than 12 years of working experience in EU policy for energy sector, **PAUL VOSS** is a 40-year-old managing director of Euroheat & Power, an international association for district heating and cooling (DHC) founded in 1954 with members in over 32 countries.



Paul Voss

MORE INFORMATION



WWW.AEGEE.ORG



WWW.EUROHEAT.ORG

What is more important: being loved or respected? How would you describe the leadership style?

Fortunately, I don't believe these two things are mutually exclusive. Traditional, authority-based people management may be a means of 'getting someone to do something' but I don't think you get the best out of people that way. It's so much better to try to bring people to the point where they're excited about doing something together.

What kind of a culture and environment do you wish to nurture in your organisation?

Since my first day in the role, I have been talking about making Euroheat & Power a great place to work, somewhere you're happy to go to when you wake up in the morning. To me, that means creating a strong sense of purpose and an environment where people feel free to take risks and try new approaches without fear. Also, the Friday breakfasts seem to help. The truth is, while I may set the overall tone, it's the whole team who makes the culture in the way they treat one another every day. People often comment that there's a certain sense of joy in our office, and that's something we're all very proud of.

Your team is a diverse bunch of millennials, Gen X and baby boomers. How do you find working with them?

Of course there are differences with respect to style and tone, but I think we can easily fall into the trap of focusing excessively on our differences and overlooking the things that bind us together. In any case, I find that a lot of the negative assumptions about the various generations are nothing more than lazy stereotypes. The 20-somethings I work with today are talented, committed people with a sincere desire to do meaningful work. In the same way, we have plenty of baby boomers in our community and I find them far more open to change and innovation than they myths would lead me to expect.

What are the biggest challenges you face at work?

The biggest challenge is probably the need to be constantly thinking about how we can change and grow as an organisation. I believe we're delivering a lot of value for our members today but it's a competitive world and our organisation does not have an inalienable right to exist. We need to earn it every day by keeping up with members' changing needs and making sure we're able to meet them.

What is one lasting impact that you hope to leave on your organisation?

When I started, I felt that the organisation had developed a habit of underestimating the power and importance of its own voice. I would like to think that in recent years we've learned to be more comfortable with winning. I think that's a habit we should try and hang on to.

Which leader do you admire? Why?

Maybe I'm just feeling nostalgic thanks to the antics of his successor, but I really do admire Barack Obama. I can't think of another public figure, much less another politician, who does a better job of combining authenticity, humanity and competence. This is so important at a time when the public seems to be rapidly (and in many cases justifiably) losing confidence in our political leaders.

What is your definition of success?

To me, success means delivering great results today while having enough fun that you want to wake up and do it all again tomorrow. If I weren't ticking both of those boxes, I would start to ask myself what the point was!

WHAT CAN LEADERS IN TRADE ASSOCIATIONS LEARN ABOUT LEADERSHIP FROM RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE?

There are lessons to be learned from one of the world's most influential drag queens, writes Enrique Velázquez, director general at Association for Consumer Credit Information Suppliers (ACCIS)



**ENRIQUE
VELÁZQUEZ**

If you are not yet familiar with the American TV show that brings drag culture to the mainstream, *RuPaul's Drag Race* is a reality competition where multiple drag queens face off against one another for the title of 'America's Next Drag Superstar'. The objective of the show is to identify individuals who can influence mainstream culture – not a given, considering the fact that they come from a LGBT background and that drag is perceived as superficial. In order to win, contestants need to emerge victorious from a variety of challenges, including makeovers and impersonations.

The show has been praised extensively, not only because it makes great entertainment but also because it showcases RuPaul's leadership skills and tactics to improve the show's reach and popularity. In my

experience, when trade associations hire for leadership roles, they look for people with qualities that do resemble those of RuPaul, widely considered the most commercially successful drag queen of all time and one of the most influential people in the world in 2017, according to Time magazine.

SO, WHY IS RUPAUL AND HIS SHOW SO INSPIRATIONAL?

The winner of *RuPaul's Drag Race* (10 seasons and counting) is a contestant who possesses the right combination of 'charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent'. These attributes are recalled throughout each episode and have to be put into practice in the weekly challenges and runway themes. Contestants that do not implement them are penalised by the panel of judges. The path to victory is properly signposted.

HAVE YOUR GOALS WELL DEFINED AND UNDERSTOOD

In my career, I have encountered associations that often have vague values and unclear or too many end goals. Reasons for that vary but a common denominator is the absence of sufficiently string top-down dynamics. As RuPaul does, the Director General (DG) needs to clearly establish what defines success for the association, what are the values guiding the association and what are the concrete steps that will be taken to be successful.

In essence, a DG has to deliver a vision for the association. A vision ensures that the association can more effectively represent, promote, protect and preserve the common interests of its members. It also lets other individuals and organisations understand who the organisation is and what it stands for, today and tomorrow. Finally, the vision should help keep members bound together by a common purpose, in particular those represented at Board level.

DON'T SHY AWAY FROM TAKING RISKS

Establishing a vision is, by definition, a risky business. The future holds no guarantees. In the show, before the judges give their final critiques, RuPaul announces that several of the contestants are "safe". While being safe means here not going home, it also means not winning challenges and, consequently, the title. DG are at the top spot of the association and have, therefore, a natural inclination to preserve their position. Associations, however, have to adapt and move on.



A leader should not be afraid to take risks. The DG has a responsibility to try innovative, out-of-the-box approaches to channel and enact change.

COMMUNICATE CONSTANTLY

In the show, every episode and every event within each episode has an associated hashtag, introduced by RuPaul himself. In fact, everything about the show becomes a short story that is made for sharing. Information is tweetable and gif-able. Fans, contestants and suppliers interact on social media. From a communications angle, the show is a platform making a group conversation possible.

Too often, associations convey or receive one-way communications. This has to do with a concept of service to members that puts the onus on reporting, debriefing and feedback elements. In my view, a better service to members is to get conversations going. This is easier said than done, particularly if the association consists of fiercely competing corporates. Against that background, the role of the DG is crucial. DGs must be in constant communication (a two-way street) with members. In order to do that, it falls on the DG to ensure that the various communications channels remain active, particularly mobile ones, and that the association creates attractive content worth talking about.

LOVE YOURSELF FIRST

Each episode of the show ends with RuPaul reciting his signature phrase: *"If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love anybody else?"* a reminder that self-love and self-confidence is the foundation upon which we can achieve our goals.

Being at the top of a trade association means being the visible face of an industry. Members, Board, President... may look at you in a judgmental way. And for good reason: the DG is the final person responsible

in the association. This can feel stressful. And lonely. In order to avoid any potential damage to the industry's reputation, the DG often takes himself or herself too seriously. There is the perception that any admission of weakness will be picked up by opponents (such as policy-makers, other associations) and held against not the DG, but the industry he or she represents. The fear of retaliation makes the contributions of these DGs come across as stiff and less genuine.

While self-sufficiency and professional competence are important traits in a leadership position, DGs are entitled to use a helping hand sometimes. It is important for the DG to build a support network (with professional contacts, mentors, others DGs) when assistance is needed, and to be able to have a comfort zone where industry topics can be discussed without suffering the stigma of ignorance. Having recently moved to an industry that I am not so familiar with, this kind of support has been invaluable.

MANAGE WELL THE UPS, DOWNS AND FAREWELLS

RuPaul's Drag Race takes place in a competitive environment where drama breaks out and contestants

often resort to 'passive-aggressive' behaviour and razor-sharp wit for managing tensions 'diplomatically', without any further verbal escalation.

DGs have to take an awful lot of decisions about hiring, procurement, budgeting, to name a few. In that context, tensions can run high and disagreements can erupt, within the team or with members. Conflict is, at the end of the day, a part of life. However, the outcome depends entirely on how one can handle it.

A good leader that works to build one-on-one associations as well as foster healthy relationships among the community can, in these situations, turn to trusted colleagues for support, comfort and encouragement. That would allow him or her to stay focused.

Eventually, a DG may be asked to *"sashay away"*. If and when that situation arises, it is important to handle it with 'grace' and 'dignity'. Departure presents opportunities to build or mend relationships in a more authentic and genuine way. It is really a small world we live in. Possessing some of RuPaul's traits, along with others like honesty, good judgment and integrity will bring the next leadership opportunity much closer.



ENRIQUE VELÁZQUEZ

is Director General of the Brussels-based Association of Consumer Credit Information Suppliers (ACCIS) since June 2017. He worked for the European Banking Federation (EBF) for over ten years, the last five as Head of Public Affairs. Prior to joining EBF, Enrique was an Officer at the Spanish Securities Markets Supervisor (CNMV) in Madrid for nearly five years. He was also an Officer at the Paris-based Committee for European Securities Regulators (CESR). He started his professional activity in education as a post-graduate level junior lecturer.

Enrique holds a double degree in European Business Studies from the University of Humberside (United Kingdom) and in Law, from the Universidad Autónoma, in Madrid.

INSIDE THE MIND OF AN ASSOCIATION LEADER: CAROLINE TEUGELS

In this new regular column, ESAE and HQ seek to provide more insights into the experience, personality and leadership style of a senior-level association executive. **Caroline Teugels, executive director of The International Federation of Podiatrists (FIP-IFP), shares her passion for association management and foot health.**



CAROLINE TEUGELS

As a younger generation association leader, how do you approach leadership differently compared to your traditional and more experienced counterparts?

First of all, I believe that leadership is not about experience or age. For me there are two criteria of good leadership when working for an association: attitude and competency. Associations are built on people and trust. I try to approach my leadership role by taking into account the specificities of working for an association and applying the strategies of good business management. Leading an association is about working from the heart with a high level of skills.

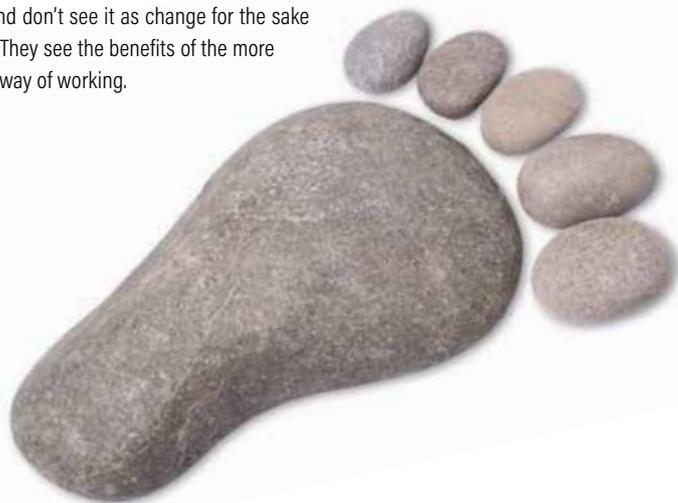
What age groups are your members from? What is it like working with them?

Our members are from very different age groups but all of them are podiatrists in their daily practice. In my first months, I had to earn the trust from the baby boomers that have been around the association almost longer than I can walk. Gen X and Y were expecting a clearer structure and more transparency. Together with the Board, we introduced a new set of policies and procedures that disrupted the way things have been going. But the members see the positive results of the changes and don't see it as change for the sake of change. They see the benefits of the more structured way of working.

You recently finished an Executive Master in International Association Management at Solvay Brussels School. What have you learned?

Don't rush into operations! This has become my mantra.

I will never forget that Saturday morning when we were asked to solve the puzzle. Instead of questioning the point of the exercise or the potential outcome, we rushed into solving the puzzle for its



own sake. Afterwards, the teacher told us the whole point of the exercise was exactly to prove that we didn't take enough time to think about strategy. It's true that we don't ask ourselves why we need to do something most of the time. It was the biggest eye-opener I had. You know that on a daily basis we only spend 4% of our time on strategy and 96% on operations. Imagine how effective we would be if we would reverse these figures!

How do you keep your employees keen and motivated?

Passion and dedication. I believe all people on this planet can be passionate about something, but you need people to be passionate about what you believe in. Thus, the first thing is to attract the right people. Secondly, you need to take time to get everybody on board. Again, don't rush into operations but take enough time to listen



to people's opinions and explain why you make a certain decision. Recognise people in their work and humanity and you'll get so much more in return.

What's the biggest risk you've ever taken?

I am an open communicator and I'm very straightforward. I prefer a direct approach which is honest and clear to everybody to the diplomatic approach where nobody is challenged and nothing gets done. The biggest risk would be to keep the status quo and not move forward. I consider the direct approach a lower long-term risk for my organisation.



What are the biggest priorities for your organisation?

The podiatry profession has an enormous positive impact on the well-being of people. All patients around the world should have the opportunity to benefit from a high level of knowledge of podiatrists. I want to make people's lives better. By having people taking care of their feet I can help achieve this. This is what gets me up in the morning.



What is your idea of a perfect pair of shoes?

A perfect pair of shoes is one that fits you so impeccably that you can give the best of yourself in everything you do. Don't climb a mountain in your dancing shoes!

Any advice for other association leaders like yourself?

Change what you cannot accept and accept what you cannot change.

CAROLINE TEUGELS

Caroline has honed their leadership skills through ESAE's peer2peer sessions and educational opportunities.

Find out more at

ASSOCIATIONEXECUTIVES.EU

Learn about Caroline's association at

WWW.FIP-IFP.ORG

THE CONCEPT OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The strengths of executive leaders are key to associations' successes, and the weaknesses of leaders, when these are significant, are reasons for failures and sometimes catastrophic ones. The ability of the CEO, and of his/her top managers, to help the Board define the right strategy and to federate the staff on the achievement of the goals and the plans to reach them, is of prime importance to the *raison d'être* of their organization.



MICHEL
BALLIEU

In a recent event organized by ESAE¹, a senior partner of an executive search company compared profiles of CEOs in trade associations with those in for-profit companies, and mentioned that companies, being under budget pressure, are pushing back responsibilities to their trade association and therefore are increasingly looking for entrepreneurs to lead their association.

While this could certainly also be true for our professional associations, I believe that there are significant differences between us and associations representing businesses' interests. The main differences are of course our mission and the non-commercial cause we are defending, and also the specificities related to our work with the support of a limited number of staff and the help of many volunteers. This, in my opinion, does require more authenticity in leadership and influential capacity than in any other job.

I personally fully agree with Susan West² when she asserts that *"being influential in the XXIst century does no longer mean power and authority, but means instead helping others to develop their expertise, and to establish meaningful relationship based on trust with a great sense of humanity"*.

In professional associations the staff is our chief asset, much more than in any for-profit companies – those have other assets: a pool of products, valuable supplies, expensive equipment and machinery, real estate..., as assets we only have our staff and our volunteers, and we absolutely need their engagement as much as their expertise, skills and talents.

When we consider our staff, job satisfaction is an essential element to get their commitment, and there are several key factors to develop satisfaction at work, among them the classic tools are fair financial benefits and a harmonious environment such as work space, comfort, reliable IT, etc. While being important, these good conditions should go along with intangible rewards such as recognition, appreciation, trust, educational opportunities, compatible co-workers, life balance, and for sure a good boss... an authentic manager.

Being an authentic leader requires us only to be ourselves, to remain what we really are, to avoid any artificial behaviour, to stop considering our position as an authoritarian role to play.

Authentic managers **recognize** their staff's efficiency, congratulate them for their successes, and thank them for their hard work.

Authentic managers are **accessible** and practise an open-door policy: they listen, and are open to others' opinions, they also are able to disagree and to clearly explain why without affecting the relationship, they understand that by **listening** carefully they can be a useful sounding board for their colleagues.

They **communicate** clearly, and regularly keep their staff informed.

Being authentic means paying attention to the staff's workload and avoiding additional stress by ensuring that deadlines are realistic; it also means being **empathic**, noticing and treating with kindness personal crisis.

Being an authentic leader is being **trustworthy**, with self-awareness, and **transparent** by admitting and acknowledging one's own limits, it is also being **credible** by showing an ability to recover quickly from one's own mistakes.

Not everybody is able to be a charismatic leader, it requires inborn qualities and skills, but we all can easily become authentic leaders: to feel confident in that way to be and to do, it is enough to be honest with ourselves, to care about others, and to live our values.

The honest, fair and authentic attitude of associations' senior management will result in a stimulating commitment by staff members, able to use their own skills and talents, positively impacting their colleagues, being loyal, and contributing actively to our bigger purpose.

1. [European Society of Association Executives \(www.associationexecutives.eu\)](http://www.associationexecutives.eu)
2. [Professor for the executive master in international association management at Solvay Brussels School \(http://exed.solvay.edu/fr/11-program/27-executive-master-in-international-association-management\)](http://exed.solvay.edu/fr/11-program/27-executive-master-in-international-association-management)

Authenticity implies also **TRUE VALUES**. Years ago, when I was a CEO, I organized a staff retreat and hired a coach to help us define together values we believed in, those that we found important for our jobs and for assuming our mission. It was a great and intensive work, it took us a dozen hours to reach a consensus and to elaborate a clear definition for each of the identified values. We were all enthusiastic and very proud of what we had produced, we posted our common values on our web site, and on the walls of our main meeting room, we wanted to be sure that our Board would be aware of them.

A couple of years later, I decided to organize a follow-up retreat, and hired a different coach to animate and facilitate our two day meeting.

A few weeks before the event I briefed the new coach about the goal and purpose of this new gathering and I proudly explained the achievements of our previous retreat. I remained speechless when the coach told me: "these are the values you and your staff like, tell me now about the values you are living." ...I was confronted with an unexpected reality: we had been too theoretical, we had used nice words and produced beautiful sentences, and that had been enough to satisfy us, but we didn't take care to apply them all in reality.

This has been one of the many laborious experiences that led me to reflect on my management style and to evolve in the direction of a more authentic leadership.

MICHEL BALLIEU

With 46 years of professional experience, including 20 in association management, Michel Ballieu, now retired, works as an association adviser. He is also specialized in staff recruitment for non-for-profit organizations. Michel Ballieu is an Active Member of the Union of International Associations.

WWW.STEP2TO.EU

LEADERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION WORLD

Associations play an essential role in today's society, as they possess the collective power needed to tackle issues that matter to the communities with which they are involved. Organisations pay much attention to programmes and operations, but the importance of human capital cannot be underestimated.



**FRANK M
WAECHTER**

This is particularly true when it comes to leadership, which will largely determine the organisation's direction, internal cohesion and ultimately propel it forward through time and the changes that go with it. In this article, we will examine the key characteristics that define leadership in non-profit and professional organisations, as well as suggestions on how to create the right environment for ongoing professional development, and best practices for effective multi-generational leadership.

LEADERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION WORLD

The first thing we need to ascertain to define the characteristics of effective leadership is whether leadership in associations differs from corporate leadership. An interview-based study carried out in

the United States revealed that while there are some differences in how leadership is perceived and implemented in associations vs corporate organisations, the similarities are much more striking than the differences. In both sectors, there has been a shift from managerial to visionary and eventually strategic leadership styles. The traits of effective leaders are similar across the board, since they include characteristics like the ability to listen, motivate, inspire and lead by example, along with a firm belief in the values, image, and mission of the organisation in question.

In both corporate and non-corporate organisations, job satisfaction and a stimulating work environment are often cited as proof of good leadership, which means that leaders must pay careful attention to the systems and hierarchical structure of their association. In modern organisations, decision-making processes are evenly distributed, and leadership structures are somewhat fluid in the sense that age or seniority is not necessarily the determining factor when it comes to stepping up to leadership roles. Twenty-first-century association directors should envision distributed leadership models like co-directorship, as these models help build trust (which is often credited as one of the most critical aspects of effective leadership), help reshape organisational hierarchy from ladder to lattice, strengthen shared commitment, and provide ongoing opportunities for leadership skills development.

Lastly, the willingness to adapt is an essential trait in leaders, since demographic and social shifts are bound to reshape organisational hierarchy, as we discuss in the following section.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

As the Baby Boomers generation begins to reach retirement age, questions arise about whether the next generations are equipped with solid leadership skills. Most organisations today will have a mix of association executives and staff from different generations: Baby Boomers, Gen Y, or Millennials, all of whom bring different world-views and perspectives to the organisation.

Multi-generational leadership requires a focus on similarities between age groups, which often include the need for collaboration, opportunities for development, a clear understanding of their responsibilities and roles, and receiving timely feedback and encouragement. Studies have found that convergence across age groups is also evident in values like sustainability, accountability, and an achievement mindset.

Capitalising on those values can help prepare young leaders for their crucial roles in the association world. Millennials working for international associations value leadership development highly along a clear career path where adequate support and training are

available throughout. Within this generation, loyalty to a single workplace/organisation is not a given, so it is vital to provide challenging opportunities and fast-track career progression that do not only allow staff to perform a role, but also to grow into it. On this note, skills development should be viewed as a two-way relationship that helps senior and junior employees to learn from each other. After all, collaborative learning and co-creation are the pillars of modern leadership and underpin all forms of professional development. One way of fostering collaborative learning is the creation of reverse mentoring schemes, where employees are strategically matched, so they help each other acquire skills and mutually reinforce their talent and skill sets.

BEST PRACTICES

By way of summary, here are some best practices that executive directors and other association executives need to take on board to help young leaders polish their leadership skills.

- ▶ Focus on the quality of relationships: people need to feel valued and given opportunities to cultivate positive social exchanges.
- ▶ Nurture a firm belief in the organisation's mission and values: these should not be perceived as an abstract concept, but as something almost tangible that has real impact in the real world.
- ▶ Motivation is not only intrinsic: there are external factors that contribute to it, such as wages, benefits, and incentive packages.
- ▶ Professional advancement paths must be clear, and there should be opportunities for growth at every stage. Be clear about what is needed to take on leadership responsibilities, and provide the tools to achieve them. These can include a combination of internal and external training programmes, different types of mentoring, peer support groups, etc.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.

- ▶ Prioritise personalised learning that is tailored to individual needs over group sessions.
- ▶ Keep clear communication channels and ask the right questions: leaders need to know first-hand what younger generations consider to be an excellent place to work, what systems they favour, which structures and tools allow them to produce their best results, and how they measure success.
- ▶ Transparency and consistency should also apply to decision-making and organisational structure.
- ▶ Make the most of established leadership development opportunities and programmes, which may include everything from formal training to forums, conferences, and summits.

CONCLUSION

From directors to volunteers, everyone who is part of an association has a role to play in the creation of sustainable leadership practices that can have a powerful impact and make a meaningful contribution to long-term organisational success. A proactive approach to leadership can also help organisations establish themselves as international associations that successfully address global and local concerns thanks to the collective strength of their staff. What's more, future-focused leadership practices can accommodate multiple generations and drive organisations forward into a promising future.

This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author FRANK M. WAECHTER, on behalf of IAPCO Council member Congrex Switzerland. Congrex Switzerland is an internationally operating agency delivering integrated solutions especially for non-profit clients. IAPCO represents today 118 companies comprised of over 5000 professional congress organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries

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EARS - Recruiting for Associations

Take a moment and remember that exciting moment when you shaped a detailed job brief, put together a job announcement and hit the “publish” button. What was left was to sit back and wait for the interesting applications to start flowing in. So, you waited, and waited, and sifted through dozens of applications only to realise, frustrated, that very few were actually matching your expectations.

Sounds familiar? So, how can you make your association more attractive to candidates?

Storytelling is everything: know your strengths and be clear on why it is great to work for you. Showcase the tangible impact the newcomer will have.

Know your competition: how you position your organisation on the market will have a huge impact on what kind of candidates you attract.

Keep up the quality check: you want to ensure that you get the best talent on board. A thorough recruitment process is a given. Candidates expect no less. Make sure you are transparent and open, though and treat the process as seriously as they do.

Finally, walk the talk. No story can function if you and your team are not on board, being the walking testimonies to it. Realising that recruitment is, ultimately, a two-way sales process is the key.

Anna Koj is a Consultant with EARS. She specialises in strategic communications, institutional relations and organisational leadership.

EARS is the first recruitment agency in Brussels dedicated to EU Affairs and International Relations. To best respond to its clients' diverse needs, EARS offers a portfolio of tailor-made services within recruitment and talent management. In the upcoming editions, it will discuss specificities of recruiting for associations.

**EA
RS** European Affairs
Recruitment Specialists



Membership Engagement

Three Paths to Better Conversations at Work

DO IT YOURSELF

You can start right now, by simply asking someone how they see the organisation and listening intently; or inviting a few colleagues over to ask them how they see the future of the organisation. Prefer to ensure the conversations are productive? Fine, just don't over plan it – no one likes to feel manipulated in a conversation. Keep your large group conversations inclusive, edgy and engaging with ideas from forums like The Art of Hosting, the book The World Café and resources found at #StimulatingConversation.

BRING IN A FACILITATOR

If you feel your people need a deeper conversational experience, get an external facilitator. Bringing in an expert will help you shape your initiative. Having fresh eyes on your association is not only insightful, it lets you be in the conversation rather than being the boss in the room. The facilitation profession has become very mature in recent years, thanks to the International Association of Facilitators (See the IAF at www.iaf-world.org) who have set the standard for ethics, methods and professionalism in group process work. The IAF also have a "Find a Facilitator" service that helps you find vetted freelance facilitators around the world.

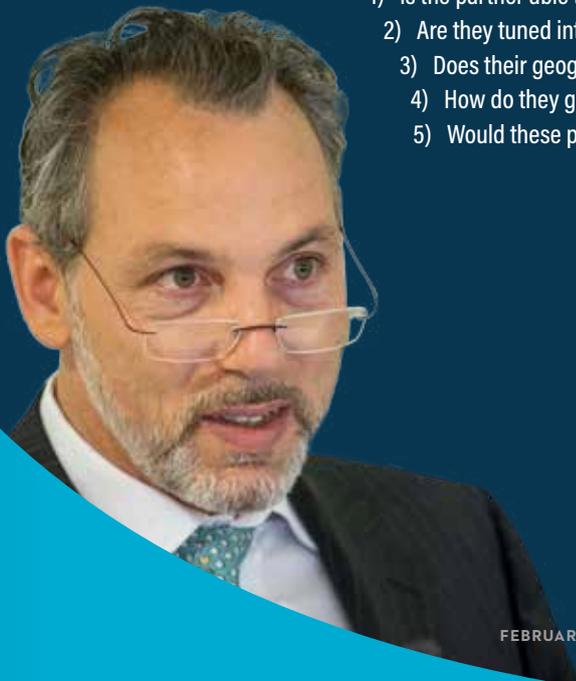
FORM A PARTNERSHIP

If you are looking for more breadth and depth, partnering with an agency is the way to go. Build on the above questions, and discuss the scope with potential partners. If the agency is worth their salt, they will ask you: how your organisational culture is evolving? Who do you need to engage with and why? Who will sponsor and advocate the initiative?

Partners can help you multiply your impact through interviews, focus groups, conversation forums, team events, and community outreach. Results can range from shared vision to reduction of member churn – and give people a sense of inclusion, belonging, and participation.

Naturally, I like my agency, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) but you have to select the one you like. Agencies like CCL, have hundreds of reference projects to draw from, making the co-creation of tailored solutions form quickly. Beyond efficiency, think about the cultural fit with your partner – these projects get up close and personal, so mind these selection factors:

- 1) Is the partner able to tailor their approach to your unique situation?
- 2) Are they tuned into the universal keys to motivation, conversation and engagement?
- 3) Does their geographic reach, languages and way of working fit with yours?
- 4) How do they guaranty the outcomes, quality and standards of their facilitation?
- 5) Would these people drive you crazy if you were stuck at an airport together?



Jeffer London is an engagement-maker at the Center for Creative Leadership.

Find his insights into dialogue at jeffer-london.com and services at ccl.org.



LEADING THE ASSOCIATION ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME

Ideas create communities, but they don't necessarily create cohesion or engagement - while ideas are critical to membership organisations, it is conversations that create communities of change. Research at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) has found that individuals may be more connected to a cause or an idea than to an organisation and its leader. Yet, it is up to leaders to transform ideas into a conversation, if they want a community of inclusion, solidarity, and engagement.

Stimulating conversations make you a better leader. By changing the discourse from a directed, top-down approach to a conversation that stimulates and engages members, leaders keep conversations dedicated to discovery. Asking questions with the sole intent to explore helps teams - in which people may be divided by topics, geographies and reporting lines - find the question central to everyone's concern. Leaders who invite members into conversation move their organisations into the space of collective intelligence and exploration.

MOVE FROM DIRECTIVE LEADER TO FACILITATIVE LEADER

Many leaders feel isolated due to the high demands and low amount of support staff. They feel personally responsible for the success or failure of an organization and have little personal buffer space around the job and themselves. Yet, as leaders extend an open invitation to conversation, they become facilitative leaders who are then able to seek wisdom from members. Shared experiences give people a sense of unity and collective memory. When these experiences are conversational, we find more loyal and motivated people.

With geographically diverse members, leaders may be unable to meet every member, but they may encourage the development of smaller groups where local members can meet and converse.

GETTING PEOPLE INTO ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Facilitative leaders invite members to move beyond a connected cause and into a long-term relationship with the organisation itself by entering conversations with a mind open to true listening and the ideas uncovered. The only limit to stimulating conversations is the SPACE, FACE, PLACE, and BASE available.

- ▶ **Make SPACE for conversation.** Create mental-space and time-space to freely explore ideas, go on tangents or dive deep into a subject. Protect yourself from distractions that lay outside of the circle of immediate contact with your conversation partner.
- ▶ **Make your conversation FACE.** Our expression and body language emit a signal - saying 'talk with me' or 'don't go there.' Let your face and tone of voice be signal not of busy-ness, but of acceptance that better conversations are possible, desired and welcome.
- ▶ **Go to a conversation PLACE.** Find a place that inspires a sense of possibility, while letting you feel at home. Put yourself in a physical environment that is different enough to be stimulating and familiar enough to be safe. This may be in your office, but is more likely to be in a café, lobby or park bench.
- ▶ **Build your conversations on a BASE.** Better dialogue at work requires honest foundations

to make it happen. Design a question that is relevant and unanswered, then invite colleagues to mutually explore the subject, in an atmosphere of genuine listening and empathy.

Conversations can also happen in online or in disparate communities by following these same practices. Leaders can use teleconferencing, open Q&A sessions, open chat dialogues, or town hall style phone calls. Ask users on virtual platforms to find their PLACE. Find event locations with private nooks for comfortable conversations to flow.



AN ASSOCIATION WHO CULTIVATES STIMULATING CONVERSATION

The International Association of Facilitators (IAF-world.org) is specialised in participatory experiences, so it was a natural place to explore facilitative leadership. We gathered a three dozen of their top facilitators to explore how to unite people. This was a Dialogue Experiment to explore how to get people talking. Through this experience, we identified five practices that bring about stimulating conversation:

Invite conversation. Make your intention and desire for dialogue known.

Ask the question. Start an inquiry that can surprise and intrigue people.

Be present. Let yourself be fascinated, open and thankful for conversations that arise.

Be inclusive. Widen your discussions to large and diverse populations.

Make meaning. Search for the human story that binds people together.

Skilled facilitators actively create an environment that cultivates inclusion. As a leader of an association, we also need to create communities that share values, openness, compassion, and curiosity.

Leaders of organisations communicate. Leaders of change must converse. Only by intentionally seeking open conversations can a leader engage the members of an organisation to be part of aligned solution. Stimulating conversations create a thread of shared understanding through all who participate, acting a cord to unite them as advocates of change.



ABOUT THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP (CCL)

CCL® is a top-ranked global provider of executive education that develops better leaders through its exclusive focus on leadership education and research. CCL help organizations worldwide, in both private and non-profit sectors, build their leadership capacity and make a true, sustainable difference.

ABOUT JEFFER LONDON AND THE DIALOGUE EXPERIMENTS

Jeffer London is Strategic Relationship Director at CCL® EMEA. He is the go-to-person for top teams who want to shape the human side of strategy. His interventions focus on dialogue, team dynamics and innovation. His leadership has led to rebranding, service transformation, best practices, a Cannes Lions award – and most of all organization-wide engagement. Jeffer is the author of the forthcoming book, *Stimulating Conversation: How To Get People Talking* and host of the #stimulatingconversation project.



Conversations at Berlin Change Days 2017, facilitated by Holger Nauheimer, Jacques Chlopczyk and Jeffer London

Association leadership *is* global leadership

The topic of this edition of Headquarters Magazine is "leadership in the association world," but I think it is impossible to separate the "association world" from the world at large. Associations play such a vital role in virtually every global issue that we need to get beyond the old-time thinking that associations are a separate part of our economies and our societies. In many cases, they are leading those societies and laying the foundations for those economies.

The importance of association's in today's global society can't be underestimated, and that, in turn, puts enormous pressure for those of us in the association field to identify, attract the very best in our industries, professions, and communities to leadership in our organizations. We can't just rely on members who have "put in their time" and gone through all of the many, many levels of our organization charts to be the only ones who attain the top levels of leadership in our organizations. We have to seek out the best and the brightest and use their talents to move forward. Don't let your association's structure be a barrier to leadership. Make your structure flexible enough to allow the best people to find a place that is comfortable for them without a minimum number of years, etc.

Here's why.

First, get away from thinking that an association is not a business. It is. Not-for-profit, NGO, non-profit, etc., are designations given to us by governments that may limit some things we can do and perhaps describe our tax status. But it's not a business philosophy. Associations have to – in fact, must be – run in a businesslike manner.

Associations have to be efficient in all of the same areas as any successful business – sales (membership), production (programs and services), customer satisfaction (member retention), franchising (chapters and affiliates), and so on. That means our volunteer leaders need to be able manage the association like a business. There are really only two main differences between businesses and associations: our "bottom line" is our mission, not our profit; and the volunteer has a vital role in the management of the association. To be a global leader, you need to attract and/or develop well-rounded leaders, regardless of their age or years of service.



Mark Levin, CAE, CSP has more than 20 years of experience as an association executive, and is also an internationally-known speaker and consultant to the nonprofit and association community. He currently serves as Executive Vice President of the Chain Link Fence Manufacturers Institute, an international trade association, and as President of B.A.I., Inc., his speaking and consulting firm.

ASSOCIATION INSIGHTS *from Mark Levin*

Second, leadership in both the association management field and among our volunteer membership has gone through a monumental shift in the last 10 years. The Baby-Boomers are in their 60's and 70's, and are retiring at a rapid rate. In 2015, Millennials (those born after 1980) became the largest single generation in the global workforce. We need to realize that the era of spending all of our time trying to figure out how to appeal to Millennials is over. They are already here. They are in their 30's and in every

part of our association, profession, and industry. One of things that Millennials believe is that leadership shouldn't be tied to seniority, it should be tied to who is best capable of helping us achieve our goal. These are talented, technology-savvy, energetic people who have a lot to offer. Don't get them excited about your organization and then have them discouraged by looking at seven layers of a leadership chart they have to navigate to feel as though they are making a contribution. Find meaningful roles for them at every level.

One last comment about Millennials. You might want to re-think titles such as "Young Leaders" and "Young Professionals" for this group. As mentioned, some of them are in their mid-30's, and ready to be an impactful leader of your organization. Maybe something like "Emerging Leaders" is more accurate.

As you expand the talents and generational diversity of your leadership (which, by the way, will make you more reflective of the global diversity of the real world) remember that not everyone does things the same way. You need to have an ongoing Leadership Development program in your association that will identify and recruit these new leaders. Just as importantly, when you find these leaders, have a plan for helping them to be successful in their leadership roles.

Dealing with a multi-generational volunteer "workforce" is difficult, so offer some training and insight into how to do that effectively. Not everyone is effective in running small, decision-oriented meetings (Board meetings, Committee meetings) so make that part of your leadership program, too. Focus on skills training that will be needed to be a successful leader in your organization. The great part about having this kind of leadership development program is that the skills they learn are transferrable back to their careers and their community leadership roles.

More and more governments, industries, professions, and communities are looking to the association community to provide leadership in the global marketplace and in global society in general. Be up to the task by developing the association leadership that meets these challenges.



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WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE AN EXECUTIVE MASTER STUDENT IN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT?

Some of our readers might already be familiar with the senior-level education programme offered by the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management, the Executive Master in International Association Management. HQ asks a couple of 2018 participants how they have benefited from the education.

Gabriela Diezhandino, Director of Public Policy, European Fund and Asset Management Association (EFAMA)



Going back to school is a challenge. How did you feel after three days of school?

Learning should never stop, and going back to school is great actually. Rather than going back to school, I would see it more like a three full-day session with a variety of experts (both lecturers and attendees) from different backgrounds and with the association world as a common context.

What goals do you want to achieve in this programme?

Learning from lecturers and experts but also learning from peer colleagues with a broad range of expertise and skills and working in different fields. Concretely, approaching the association context with an outside eye and being able to deepen knowledge and thinking about how to help an association thrive.

How would you apply what you have learned professionally?

The programme touches upon the different elements that, together, form the life of an association. This could not fit better with my everyday working life, as Director of Public Policy in a European Association. It also puts you outside your working routines and methods, and provides you with new lenses, perspectives and visions.

Susan J. West gave a three-day lecture session about how to communicate, build relationships and lead in increasingly diverse and complex environments. How do you find it?

The Executive Master could not have started better. Susan J. West's module on "Leadership and Change" was an absolute highlight. This lecture is spot-on and touches upon issues that we all deal with at one point

or another, regardless of the position we have within our own organisations.

Susan cleverly presents ideas, concepts and scenarios that make you think in and outside the box of daily life. Susan is inspiring and perceptive, and she gave me long-lasting food for thought. As much as I learned during those three days, it still seems like the top of the iceberg. To me, she has opened the door to much inward thinking and further reflection about what can be done better, or differently.

The first module of the course was leadership and change. What did you make of it? What is your idea of leadership in the association business?

I do not believe that leadership can be defined. There are many forms, and surely not all are efficient. Susan helped us understand that finding the best in others and putting it to good use is the most powerful form of leadership. She masterfully drove us through the roads of self- and interpersonal awareness, EQ, perception, resilience and change – to name a few concepts – and how all these elements are important to decide how best to address situations and carry forward our trajectory and that of an association.

Javier García Gómez-Díe, Executive Director, SEPA - Spanish Society of Periodontology



What goals do you want to achieve in this programme?

Beyond updating my specific skills for non-profit organisations, my particular objective is to share experiences and receive information from specialists in management of associations and federations.

I firmly believe that we have a huge potential to contribute to the transformation of society, which I think is vital these days. Companies and policy makers need to identify bodies that can provide a good source of legitimacy to combine the power of money with the strength of law. The complexity of society in this century requires the empowerment of a new "soft" perspective based on the general interest or the sum of different perspectives that are united by a common desire to improve the world.

The first module of the course was leadership and change. What did you make of it?

Susan J. West is a great teacher with an extremely dynamic and honest approach. It was also great getting to understand leadership from the perspective of Isabel Bardinet, who is in charge of one of the world's most important scientific societies. I certainly came away with a better understanding of leadership while being able to hear opinions from my colleagues.

What are your credentials? How would you apply what you have learned professionally?

I work for the Spanish Society of Periodontology and the SEPA Foundation based in Madrid in Spain. These organisations are in a clear process of internationalisation due to the common interests with other communities in the world. Additionally, I am a strategic consultant to the European Federation of Periodontology and to the Ibero-Panamerican Federation of Periodontology.

My expertise focuses on how to manage non-profit organisations in strategic terms from a new perspective based on intangible assets that serve as the main value of associations and foundations.

I find the first module very interesting as it helps me identify the leadership and challenges of organisations that are shaped by volunteers and where the source of legitimacy and power is constantly changing. These points must be taken into consideration in order to properly come up with a strategic plan. Values such as transparency, ethics and trust are crucial in dealing with this kind of organisation.

Susan J. West gave a three-day lecture session about how to communicate, build relationships and lead in increasingly diverse and complex environments. How do you find it?

Diversity and complexity is the natural framework of associations or federations and non-profit organisations. Clear values and long-term perspectives and commitments based on confidence are the principles of our organisations. Of course, we have to work with professional teams, but the most important point is how to involve and liaise with both volunteers and professionals within a structure where the board is not totally focused on the process of making operational decisions and whose members are usually part-time on a short-term basis. Also, how to open our minds and souls to tackle the complexity and diversity

of our organisations if we want to expand the horizons is a fundamental question to be pondered.

What is your idea of leadership in the association business?

As Susan J. West says, leadership is a relationship: "The most powerful form of leadership is one in which the leader takes the privilege in finding the best in others and puts it to good use." In this statement, she highlights how our day-to-day work usually involves working with people who possess a high level of knowledge.

I find the Executive Masters programme very useful for raising awareness that an association today is a very powerful tool. I am so grateful for the excellent lecture by Susan J. West, the best practice of Isabel Bardinet and the great coordination of Asja Kamenica. I am very thankful to the Solvay Brussels School and the organisations that have contributed to creating this programme.

EXECUTIVE MASTER IN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

From January to June, training in English
17 days, 9 am - 5.30 pm

For senior personnel and executives
of international associations

The programme is organised in partnership
with visit.brussels, ESAE, UIA and FAIB. These 3
last professional associations already closely
collaborating with Headquarters magazine

MORE INFORMATION

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SHARING DATA TO **BETTER** DRIVE TRAVEL ACTIVITY

An interview of Olivier Ponti, Research Manager at Amsterdam Marketing and Chairman of the European Cities Marketing Research & Statistics Knowledge Group



What is ECM (European Cities Marketing) and how does data help its members make better business decisions?

ECM provides an exchange platform for Leisure, Meetings Industry and City Marketing professionals. Thanks to ECM, these member organisations share knowledge, best practices and widen their network and have more cards in hand to enhance the attractiveness of their destination. An essential part of the ECM activity - and one of the main success factors of the association - is its Knowledge Groups. These teams of experts focus on specific themes of city marketing and urban tourism development. They discuss current issues for cities, share industry best practices, prepare reports, conduct surveys and, in some cases, undertake joint marketing activities. The Research & Statistics Knowledge Group, which I have been working on since 2006 (first as vice-chairman and then as chairman since 2010), is in charge of identifying promising research topics for ECM members, of developing methodologies and innovative tools to answer questions and coordinate studies within the network. In practice, there is a significant outreach to members to make sure they share information that is considered strategic but we also work in close collaboration with ECM partners.

Does your Research & Statistics Knowledge Group publish reports? If yes, on what subjects and how often?

We conduct all kinds of ad hoc studies to meet the needs of our members. As some questions come up regularly, we also publish annual reports on, for example, the following topics: the evolution of hotel bednights in European cities, trends in the conference and business meetings market, funding of our members. Quarterly, we also publish a report focusing on short-term tourism, the City Tourism Monitor.

Can you detail the report on the hotel bednights?

Entitled ECM Benchmarking Report, this report measures the evolution of urban tourism through the volume of overnight stays over the past five years in more than 120 cities. ECM members are invited to enter their nights each month on an online platform called TourMIS. The data are available all year long and, once a year, in partnership with MODUL University Vienna (Austria), we analyse all the information available to produce a report that allows cities to compare themselves with each other, to put their own results in perspective. For the cities, this analysis work is essential: a destination recording a growth rate of 3% in a market does not interpret this information in the same way if the European average is + 10% or, conversely, -5%! Thanks to a tool like the ECM Benchmarking Report, our members have solid data on which they base their marketing strategy. To know what are the services of the competing cities in key emitting markets like China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States is the opportunity to make the choices that best fit the growth strategy of a destination. A city that wants to develop quickly, for example, will choose

to be active in markets that combine high volumes and high growth rates, whereas a destination that wants to diversify its clientele above all may decide to invest in smaller markets but with explosive growth. In addition to data on overnight stays, the report includes analyses by international experts on urban tourism. The latter identify the factors that have influenced tourism over the past year, present forecasts of the evolution of tourism demand in Europe in the coming years, or compare the level of tourist density in the different European cities. Over the years, the ECM Benchmarking Report has become an indispensable tool for capturing the evolution of urban tourism. We are already working on the fourteenth edition of this report, which is scheduled for release in summer 2018, along with the ECM Meetings Statistics Report.

The ECM Meetings Statistics Report... What is it?

It is the counterpart of the ECM Benchmarking Report, but for the congress and business meetings sector. The idea is to have a monitoring and benchmarking tool that gives an overview of the evolution of this sector and allows destinations to develop smart acquisition strategies. Each city must be able to identify their chances and have a targeted marketing approach. The report is based on a database containing information on more than 300,000 meetings held in a European city in the last five years, whether national or international events, and whether these events are corporate or not. We use the definition of the World Tourism Organisation to categorize these meetings. For each meeting, we take into account several factors in our analysis: the seasonality, the size and duration of the congress, the theme, but also the types of places that host these events.

There are already other reports on this subject. Why did you decide to do another one?

Seven years ago, when we launched this report, the goal was to go further than the benchmark rankings published by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and the Union of International Associations (UIA). These organisations focus only on very specific segments of the international association meetings market, an approach which seemed to us - and still seems to me - to be too restrictive. Our report is the only one to give an overview of the meetings industry in the European cities; it responds to a real expectation from our members. From one year to the next, we note that the quality of the data provided by the various destinations included in this study rises. This means not only that the quality of the report continues to grow, but also that our members have reached a higher level of professionalism as they are now better able to follow the evolution of the industry on their own territory.

You also produce a report on funding models for ECM members. What is it about?

The ECM Members Finance Survey is a report that compares the funding models of destination management organisations and convention bureaux. Once again, it is thanks to the involvement of ECM members that we are able to collect this sensitive data. The report identifies interesting trends at European level, such as the gradual shift from a public funding model to more trade-oriented models. Through the report, our members also keep each other informed of the evolution of their budget for the coming year and can therefore put their experiences at the local level into perspective.

You say that ECM members share their data. Are there not some reluctance among the members regarding this sharing. Indeed, they are somehow competitors, are not they?

Cities wishing to join ECM only need take a look at the association's slogan («Meet, Share, Grow») to know what to expect! There is great trust and freedom of speech within the network. While some destinations are competing, they know they can learn a lot from each other, and ultimately European cities become more competitive on a global scale. The logic that prevails is that of «coopetition», a mixture of cooperation and competition.

Can you tell us more about the City Tourism Monitor?

The City Tourism Monitor is a tourism monitoring tool powered by ECM members through a quarterly survey. By completing the questionnaire, tourist offices and convention bureaux of member cities provide information on their feelings about the past quarter and their expectations for the coming quarter.

Are these reports exclusive for ECM members?

The ECM Meetings Statistics Report, the ECM Members Finance Survey and the City Tourism Monitor are exclusively made for members. However, it is possible for everyone to acquire the ECM Benchmarking

Report by visiting the website of the association. Thus, companies, universities or consultants, who cannot claim the status of ECM member, still have the opportunity to access information.

In your opinion, could ECM reports and methodologies developed at a European level be used in other continents?

I think it's possible. We are in talks with the UNWTO to see how the ECM Benchmarking Report could serve as a basis for a similar report at the global level. It is still too early to say whether the idea will materialize but, for our part, we would be happy to share with the world the innovative tools developed by European cities!



ABOUT ECM

European Cities Marketing is a non-profit organisation improving the competitiveness and performance of leading cities of Europe by providing a platform for convention, leisure and city marketing professionals to exchange knowledge, best practice and widen their network to build new business. European Cities Marketing is promoting and linking the interests of 100 members from 36 countries.

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CONSENT, CONSENT AND MORE CONSENT SIMPLEVIEW'S PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE GDPR

Eric Rankin, Vice President of Product Development at Simpleview, a US-based provider of digital strategy and marketing solutions for destination marketing organisations (DMOs) worldwide, provides some tips that could help you prepare for compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In a nutshell, what does GDPR mean to the global meetings industry?

The purpose of the EU GDPR is to protect the personal data of residents of the EU online. It gives EU residents more control over if, how, when, and how much of their data is used. If you have personal data of EU residents or EU business contacts in your databases, GDPR will affect how marketing is done in the years to come. GDPR was not a total shock to the system for us. It's not unlike the Canadian anti-spam law, CASL, which came out in three stages in 2014, 2015, and 2017. The primary details are the same: consent, level of consent, fines for non-compliance. The GDPR requires greater accountability, however.

In practice, how will GDPR change the way we do things?

It means that in your marketing practices, what you communicate to whom and when is going to matter. Be clear you know who you are communicating to (did they consent to your communications?), and what you are communicating to them (did they specifically consent to the type of information you're sending?). Only collect information to communicate what you need to successfully. This has long been a best practice recommendation at Simpleview.

If all you really need is an email address to send a digital event brochure, request consent for that information for that purpose. If you have offices anywhere in the world, and want to be able to send follow-up information to a EU citizen about your venue or destination after the initial brochure is sent, with the EU GDPR in place, you're going

Eric Rankin (right), Vice President of Product Development at Simpleview, with Marcel Visser, Editor-in-Chief of Headquarters Magazine

to need consent to gather further data to target relevant messages, and to keep sending those messages.

What else should we keep in mind?

With EU GDPR regulations, consumers also have the option now to review the data you've collected on them, and to request that you delete it. You'll want to be sure you have processes in place to do this.

And, as always, make sure the data you collect is secure. Are your partners also compliant? Are the tools and processes of your data processors compliant? For example, DMOs are controllers of information. Simpleview serves as a processor. Both data controllers and processors have responsibilities to maintain EU GDPR compliance, and in some places, these overlap. Compliance and consumer data protection is thus a dual responsibility, a shared responsibility. Both controllers and processors must have systems and processes in place to ensure proper GDPR compliance.

The gist is this: Communicate responsibly and respectfully. Collect only the data you need to collect to do your job, and do it with consent. EU-consumers and EU-business contacts need to opt in, sometimes twice, not opt out. They need to give you clear permission up front to collect their data. Do all you can to keep that data as secure as possible, and work with your partners—your data processors—to ensure the same on their end.

What should we do to prepare for the GDPR compliance by the May 25 deadline?

Read and understand the EU GDPR, and make sure your staff understand what's required to achieve and maintain compliance. Understand the EU GDPR's definitions of terms like personal data, consent, opting in, controller, and processor. Know the details, like "the GDPR will supersede any and all existing data privacy and protection laws currently upheld by the EU's member states." Then it's time to adapt. Put policies in place to ensure everyone on staff follows the same processes to continue compliance. And be sure to pick the right partners when it comes to data collection and storage. Know what they are doing to be compliant, and know that in Simpleview's case, we're connecting with our partners, like Act-On, Cvent and Stackla, to do the same.

Whatever software an organisation employs, they need to consider whether their systems can collect the data and be compliant with the EU GDPR. Yet the human factor is just as important. Software can't solve everything. Each organisation has to have rules in place around the use of their systems and process to ensure compliance. Again, compliance is a shared responsibility, on the software side and the human side, but along with offering software and digital marketing solutions, we're happy to consult and provide guidance in any way we can.

How did an American company like Simpleview become familiar with the European regulations?

Simpleview has been in travel and tourism for 15+ years. We've been doing business overseas since 2012. We work with convention bureaux and tourist boards in approximately 540 cities across five continents, providing industry leading CRM and CMS systems, plus digital marketing, website design, business intelligence, and mobile services. We understand the global travel and tourism community and how business is done where. Our system is designed to work the way DMOs and the job roles within them need it to work. Our technology experience puts us in a position to understand and be comfortable with specific and varied technological requirements, whether it's EU GDPR regulations, Canada's Anti-Spam Law (CASL), or Germany's double opt-in procedure.



Vivian Xu – Managing Director Headquarters Magazine in GDPR discussions with Eric Rankin (right), Vice President of Product Development at Simpleview and Rolf Senstad (left), General Manager Europe at Simpleview

MORE INFORMATION

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WOMEN ARE LEADING THE CHANGE



In this new section, we bring you the latest appointments and promotions in the rapidly changing industry of meetings and events. In this issue we would like to highlight three important women for their contributions in their areas of expertise.

HEIKE MAHMOUD

New COO for Congress Center Hamburg

On 1 March 2018, Heike Mahmoud will assume the leadership position at the Congress Center Hamburg (CCH). As the new CCH Chief Operating Officer, Heike will be a Member of the Executive Board of Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH (HMC). Heike Mahmoud has been active in the national and global convention and event business for more than 25 years. She started her career in 1993 with a Professional Conference Organiser (PCO) firm. In 1998 she became Head of Sales and Marketing at Europe's biggest hotel and convention centre complex, and after joining visitBerlin as VP and Conventions Director in 2001, she successfully developed the Berlin Convention Office (BCO), which she then headed until accepting her new role at HMC. With her broad experience and her dense network of international connections, Heike Mahmoud is one of the top executives in the global events business. She is taking over from Edgar Hirt who retired at the end of 2017. In Hamburg Heike Mahmoud and her team will initially focus on driving the marketing efforts for the CCH which is currently undergoing comprehensive modernisation. When the CCH reopens, it will be among Europe's most advanced convention centres



ELIF BALCI FISUNOGLU

ICCA's new Regional Director for Europe



On January 2018, Elif Balci Fisunoglu joined the ICCA Head Office in Amsterdam as the newly elected Regional Director for Europe.

Elif has been an extremely active contributor to the ICCA community during her 15 years with the Istanbul Convention Bureau, where she held senior sales and marketing positions before serving three years as General Manager. She has been a speaker, mentor and regular Congress attendee; she also played a major role in the bidding team and Local Host Committee for the 2014 Congress in Antalya. She has chaired ICCA's Mediterranean Chapter, has regularly participated in Client-Supplier workshops, and has hands-on experience of using a wide variety of ICCA's business tools.

ICCA CEO Martin Sirk stated: "Our Regional Director positions require a unique combination of strategic thinking, practical problem-solving, cultural sensitivity, and deep knowledge of ICCA and the wider meetings industry. Elif ticks all of these boxes, combining impressive academic credentials with extensive hands-on experience in winning bids, managing tight marketing budgets, and building collaborative relationships. I believe she will quickly become a valuable asset for our members throughout Europe."

CLARE SMITH

new PCMA Board Chair for 2018

From 16 January 2018, Claire Smith, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Vancouver Convention Centre, takes on the role of Professional Convention Management Association's (PCMA) Board Chair for this year. Smith's appointment makes her the first-ever supplier, Canadian and non-US-based Chair of PCMA's Board of Directors. Smith is a recognised voice in the global meetings industry over the last 25 years. She has been on PCMA's Board of Directors for the past four years, and in 2016, she co-chaired the PCMA Convening Leaders Conference in Vancouver, Canada. Apart from actively participating in various industry associations, she is also regularly a featured speaker and session facilitator at industry conferences in Asia, North America and Europe. As the Vancouver Convention Centre's Vice President, Sales and Marketing, she is responsible for strategic business development, leading and directing the sales, marketing and communications team, as well as positioning the facility in the global marketplace.



**engage,
collaborate
& innovate!**



6th European Association Summit 2018
8 & 9 March
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Come and join the European Association Summit in Brussels, the world's leading capital for international associations!

SQUARE - Brussels Meeting Centre
REGISTER NOW!

Why should you attend EAS 2018?

For the sixth consecutive year, visit.brussels is organising the European Association Summit (EAS) in Brussels on 8 and 9 March. The event has become an unmissable opportunity to share information and knowledge, and network with other international associations. This annual peer-to-peer education and networking forum is being organised in collaboration with the leading partners in the sector: ESAE (European Society of Association Executives), FAIB (Federation of European & International Associations Based in Belgium), UIA (Union of International Associations), ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association) and PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association).

EAS covers the issues you face

The EAS programme is designed by associations for associations. Ranging from big societal issues, European Union matters, strategy, governance, member relations, event management, communications and new technologies, the summit has the right mix of issues for all associations.

Diversity of case studies

One moderator and multiple speakers provide debates, lectures on practical issues, interactive sessions with the audience. Join us and learn directly from peers from the association community.

Give your input

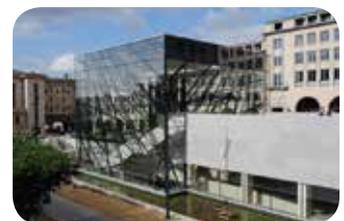
Peer-to-peer is changing the world. At the EAS event you'll have the opportunity to highlight your local issues with peers at different sessions and receive new ideas for your daily activities.

Brussels, THE hub for associations

Hosting more than 2000 associations, Brussels is THE key hub for international associations. By joining the summit you also plug into a bigger network and expand your professional contacts.



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THE 2ND BESTCITIES GLOBAL FORUM IN TOKYO: **BUILDING CULTURAL BRIDGES ACROSS THE WORLD**

Following the successful footsteps of the inaugural Global Forum in Dubai in 2016, BestCities Global Alliance gathered about 40 international association event organisers in Tokyo in early December last year for an impressive programme of education, insight and networking. Words by Vivian Xu



WHAT OUTCOMES MIGHT WE EXPECT IN 20 OR 30 YEARS?

This question was asked at the welcome dinner of the 2017 BestCities Global Forum, which made me wonder about the long-term vision of the meetings industry. It also led me to ponder another question: "What kind of impact would my actions have in the next 20 years or so?"

I would like to thank Rick Antonson, former President and CEO of Tourism Vancouver (and currently a full-time writer), for introducing the **Cathedral Thinking** into my thought process.

"Though there are many instances to which Cathedral Thinking can be applied, they all require the same foundation: a far-reaching vision, a well-thought-out blueprint, and a shared commitment to long-term implementation."

During the Open Space Workshop on the **Cathedral Thinking**, I had the opportunity to discuss what associations can do with association executives to ensure that meetings and societies have a long-term positive impact on the world's big issues, such as health, security, and environment. We all agreed these measures can be tackled conceptually but implementing them is hard.

So how does the BestCities Global Alliance come into play? It serves as a driving force in disseminating knowledge, promoting the meeting industry in both local and international media, and driving interaction with local governments in order to promote the genuine impact of policy on the meetings industry.

NAVIGATING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN JAPAN

When Miriam van der Horst, Learning and Development Consultant at Learning 360, asked us how much we knew about Japanese culture, some words popped out in my mind: the Japanese are polite, busy, well-organised and strict.

As a native Chinese, I was confident I wouldn't suffer from a severe dose of culture shock during my first trip to Japan because I thought Chinese and Japanese cultures were quite similar. I was wrong, completely wrong. Japanese culture is far more complex and traditional than I expected.

During my stay in Tokyo, I visited a local Japanese restaurant. When I was about to order, the waitress kneeled down in front of me. I was shocked by her behaviour and I have to admit I felt uncomfortable looking at her. In China, as in many other countries, kneeling down is the highest gesture of respect

reserved for those more senior than you. There is a saying in Chinese: *There is gold under the knee of a man*, which means kneeling-down is as precious as gold. In my culture, kneeling is not something you do casually, but it's a common gesture for showing respect in the eyes of the Japanese. It's not helped by the fact that the Japanese prefer to communicate on the same level, so when the customer is seated, the waitress gets down on her knees in order to be on the same level with the customer.

This experience heightened my sensitivity to cultural differences, and made me realise how you decipher cultural nuances could make or break your business. According to Cultural Dimension Model by Geert Hofstede, there are six different models of national culture, and understanding them would have helped me cope with my Japanese culture shock better.





HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU TACKLE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES EFFECTIVELY:

- ▶ Avoid the stereotype, accepting tendencies
- ▶ Identify the cultural model
- ▶ Adapt and accept the unfamiliar cultural environment
- ▶ Listen and observe, first think and then talk
- ▶ Personal Attributes: stay curious, confident, and flexible and open-minded. Tolerant ambiguities, respect cultural differences
- ▶ Enjoy the journey

POWER DISTANCE

The extent to which the less powerful members of society accept and expect the power is distributed unequally. Extreme countries are New Zealand and Malaysia

INDIVIDUALISM

The degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. Extreme countries are United States and China

MASCULINITY

The degree to which a society complies with traditional male and female's roles. Extreme countries are Japan, Austria, and Sweden

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

The degree of anxiety that society members feel when that is faces with uncertain and unknown situations. Extreme countries are Greece, Belgium, and Singapore

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION

This dimension describes a society's time horizon. Extreme countries are German, Japan, China, and Mexico

INDULGENCE

A culture's ability to satisfy the immediate needs and personal desires of its members. Extreme countries are Mexico, Australia, Russia and China

In terms of doing international business, the impact of cultural differences could be felt in the following areas:

- ▶ Relationship between boss and subordinates
- ▶ Gender-appropriate behaviours
- ▶ Decision-making process
- ▶ Communication styles
- ▶ Negotiation strategies
- ▶ Concepts of right and wrong
- ▶ Ways of handling problems or conflicts
- ▶ Response to changes
- ▶ Socialising outside of work

It's a good idea to bridge cultural differences by putting the above-mentioned tips into practice. I can't wait to try them out in my next trip. I am already looking forward to the next edition of BestCities Global Forum in Bogotá and wondering what I will learn!



GLOBAL POWER CITY INDEX 2017

TOKYO RANKED NO.3 BEHIND LONDON AND NEW YORK

Tokyo, the host city for the 2017 BestCities Global Forum, has been a proud member of the BestCities Global Alliance since 2014. By hosting 225 international congresses in 2016, Japan's capital has retained its position in UIA's top ten cities for the sixth consecutive year.

According to the Global Power City Index (GPCI) 2017, Tokyo was ranked in the third place behind London and New York and ahead of Paris and Singapore. Given the global competition between cities, the GPCI, launched in 2008, evaluates and ranks the

world's major cities according to their 'magnetism', or their comprehensive power to attract creative talent and business enterprises from around the world.

Over the past decade, GPCI has gathered global city leaders to describe their visions for the next ten years by analysing the fluctuations in urban power, strengths and weakness of the global cities, as well as identifying urban policy issues, in order to provide a better understanding of the interest and attraction of the global cities.

All the top five cities have remained in their positions for nine consecutive years. Among the 44 targeted

cities, there are five main key factors influencing the ranking: Economy, Research and Development, Cultural Interaction, Liveability, Environment and Accessibility.

MORE INFORMATION

WWW.MORI-M-FOUNDATION.OR.JP

JAPAN NEW IDEAS START HERE

Always looking to make a splash as a meetings and events destination, Japan is ready to talk the talk and walk the walk!

And with the upcoming 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, the world will be watching as this island nation takes its rightful place in the sun as the only Asian country to host the Summer Olympics twice!

Over the years Japan has remained timeless because its limitless – its unique culture, delicately dramatic food, its mountains, powder snow, bubbling hot springs and tropical beaches along with its dynamic and vibrant cities and its superior reputation as a center for scientific knowledge and research has fired the imagination of a whole generation of Meeting Planners. To highlight its advantages as an innovative and exciting meetings and events destination, Japan has adopted the tagline, "New Ideas Start Here." With this tagline, the message is clear – coming to Japan brings visitors into contact with the imagination and intelligence of Japan's people and culture which underpins the country's high quality, technological expertise and creativity. Holding meetings and events in Japan enables participants to gain inspiration and flashes of insight that enable future business growth. Furthermore, with strong local support from local convention bureaus, overseas meetings and events planners are also able to plan fun group activities to unique venues that are not normally open to casual tourists.

If 'Knowledge is King' then Japan is the kingdom where world-class scientific and industrial knowledge and talent comes together. It has long been a leading force for R&D in engineering, pharmaceuticals and robotics and also has a strong academic community. Japan has one of the largest national memberships within many international associations, and a strong tradition of hosting international association meetings.

It's unique history, everyday customs and regional diversity stimulate the senses and intellect, inspiring new ideas and perspectives - it's easy to get inspired when wrapped in a splendid time capsule of colourful cultural kaleidoscope.

Japan is known for its high-quality conferences and events grounded in many years of experience, it's network of local convention bureaus, professional congress organizers and DMCs bring a high level of professionalism to all events in Japan. Not to forget the undeniable charm of the Japanese spirit of hospitality wherein the culture of courtesy remains a key part of the Japanese meetings and events industry.



JNTO HAS COMPLETELY REVAMPED ITS WEBSITE IN FEBRUARY 2018

Meeting and Event Planners will benefit from upgraded services such as:

- The easy-to-use planning tool for venue and facility searches
- An extended list of suppliers to help you organize your events

WWW.JAPANMEETINGS.ORG



Japan.
Meetings & Events
New ideas start here

JNTO
Japan National
Tourism Organization

Headquarters Tokyo, Japan
CONVENTION@JNTO.GO.JP

DYNAMIC APPEAL OF JAPAN'S UNIQUE MEETINGS AND EVENTS VENUES

The famed Japanese spirit of invention and reinvention is carried-forward into its successful meetings and events industry with unique venues constantly added to its repertoire, giving us the opportunity to appreciate and explore new elements of the land and its people. Here's a quick look at some of the splendid one-of-a-kind meetings and events venues.



DAIGOJI TEMPLE



Situated in Kyoto, Daigoji is a Shingon Buddhist temple and a designated World Heritage Site. A treasure-trove of Japanese history and culture, the temple possesses 75,522 National Treasures including the buildings, wall paintings and other works. Infact, the five-storey pagoda is the oldest verified wooden building in Kyoto! Not surprisingly it turned out to be a grand evening as the XXIII World Congress of Neurology hosted a Japanese cultural networking event in September 2017 at this prestigious venue. The evening which included a special viewing of the Sanboin and its garden, Karamon (Chinese gate) and Omote-Shoin (main drawing room) gave the participants a taste of the rich and unique Japanese culture.

VALLEY OF GANGALA



If in the mood for something even older than the oldest building of Kyoto, then the Valley of Gangala in Okinawa provides an extraordinary opportunity to step into an ancient world of a network of limestone caves and forests crafted by nature over millions of years! Touted as one of the most unique venues in Japan, this mysterious space spanning about 600 square meters has a ceiling of falling limestone cavern droplets, bare cave walls and small forms of life that freely inhabit the space! This award-winning rustic setting has also attracted many famous artists for live performances. Backed up by excellent hospitality, the in-house Cave Café turned out to be a super-hit spot to host a remarkable banquet at the 2017 IEEE Automatic Speech

Recognition and Understanding Workshop held in December 2017.

NARITASAN MUSEUM OF CALLIGRAPHY



For some, calligraphy is frozen poetry! And if you find yourself amongst this crowd then the Naritasan Museum of Calligraphy which exists in Chiba prefecture, is just the venue for you. This tranquil gallery is located in the vicinity of the three ponds inside Narita Park which combines the harmony of the art of calligraphy with lush, landscaped grounds and a beautiful pond. A specialized art museum displaying beautiful writing from the end of the Edo Era to the present day, it features about 250 fine works of calligraphy and has long been the base of preservation,

study and diffusion of modern Japanese calligraphy. Such an idyllic surrounding turned out to be the ideal backdrop to host a congress dinner at the 10th Biennial Asia Pacific Conference on Speech, Language and Hearing in September 2017. Japanese culture was shared with conference participants through tea served in the tearoom and other activities.

KANZE NOH THEATRE



Another special venue to delve into traditional Japan is the Kanze Noh Theatre which recently moved from its long-standing home at Shoto to a new location in the capital's

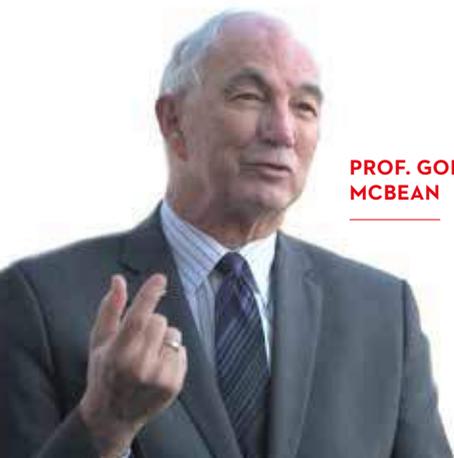
hip Ginza district. Noh is one of Japan's most intricate and ancient forms of dance-theatre from the 14th century and is named after the previous head of the Kanze School, Sakon Kanze XXV. While the theatre maybe new, the atmosphere seems to be the same as that of the Shoto location, the stage at the newly completed theatre was moved, unchanged from the previous theatre and pays ode to the many pioneers of this art form who performed on this prestigious stage! With its new central location it hopes to attract even more audience especially keeping the 2020 Summer Olympics in mind and it even hosted the Japonismes 2018 Associate Program press conference to mark celebrations of the 160th anniversary of friendship between Japan and France which featured participants including Mansai Nomura and Shinobu Terashima.

GLOBAL VOICES

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROF. GORDON MCBEAN, PRESIDENT OF ICSU

Japan's trailblazing efforts and consequently its meteoric rise in the field of scientific and industrial knowledge backed by a world-class talent pool are easily evident in the 26 Nobel Prize winners the country has produced in the areas of physics, chemistry and medicine.

Recognizing Japan's "soft-power" as a meetings and events destination "Where Knowledge and Talent Meet" is Prof. Gordon McBean, President of the International Council of Science (ICSU). Known for his service and achievements in the fields of climate change and natural hazards research. Here's our interview from his visit to Japan for an International Conference:



**PROF. GORDON
MCBEAN**

When you think about Japanese science, technology and scholar studies, what is the first thing that comes to your mind?

I have always been impressed with the high level of Japanese technology. I would have to say that I bought my first Japanese car in the eighties and I have been buying Japanese cars ever since. But that is not the real reason I come here for. It is because of the technology and the high level of science in the fields that I work in which is climate change and disaster risk reduction have very high level of research activity in Japan.

What do you think about the actual status of scientific research in Japan, within and outside of your own field of experience?

Japan's science is very good. And I mean, when we are putting together international scientific programs or projects, we try and bring together a team of scientists from around the world with an appropriate distribution by geography, by discipline, by gender,

by age, those kinds of factors. But if, as president of the ICS, I receive a list of 20 members for a science project and there was not a Japanese one on it, I would question why not? I think the Japanese science community is very strong, in the fields I work in, climate change and particularly disaster risk reduction, the strength of understanding and know-how, not only a combination of engineering science and technology, but also importantly the physical natural sciences of weather systems, ocean currents, flooding, tsunamis and also the social issues, the cultural issues.

One of the biggest problems we're seeing in unfortunate severe weather events is what we call: risk interpretation to action. If people hear a warning, do they know what to do? Do they understand? Do they respond in a way that reduces the impact on them and their children?

So it is very important and we see here studies of this and scientists who have been working on this kind of issues in Japan.

GLOBAL VOICES

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROF. RAAD SHAKIR, PRESIDENT OF WFN

One of the highlights for Japan's meetings and events industry in 2017 was the XXIII World Congress of Neurology (WCN) which took place from September 16-21 in Kyoto. Co-hosted by the Japanese Society of Neurology and Asian and Oceanian Association of Neurology, this massive event attracted more than 8,600 participants which is the highest number of attendees at any WCN!

It not only brought together leading Nobel laureates, scientists, public health experts and policy-makers from around the world but also saw the opening ceremony being graced by the Crown Prince and his wife! Building up on the success of the XII WCN meeting which was also held at the very same venue in Kyoto back in 1981, the WCN 2017 turned out to be a historic meeting point stitching together Kyoto's more than 1000 years of history as Japan's ancient capital and its strength as a modern marvel as showcased by the mega-geometric structure of the venue, the Kyoto International Conference Center. As noted by Professor Raad Shakir, President of the World Federation of Neurology (WFN), the WCN 2017 underlined Japan's MICE industry's strength in organizing high-quality conferences

and events grounded in many years of experience along with a unique undeniable Japanese spirit of hospitality. Here's an extract:

During the long period of preparation for this convention, how did you feel about Japan's teamwork?

Japan is fantastic. I'm not saying this in any way to flatter you but they work as a team and the teamwork is meticulous, detailed and the attention to excellence is very impressive and very noticeable. When Japan won the bid, 4years ago, I was delighted in many ways because I said Japanese will do everything for us but they

showed a lot of promises and a lot of understanding that they suggest something to you in very polite and Japanese way and there is Japanese way. We respect that. And we have to learn as well that when we come to Japan, when we try to do any activities whether its social activities or whether it's a trying to get food, trying to get transport, there is a certain Japanese way of doing it which is efficient but we are not used to it, the rest of the world. So we have to learn how to live with that and once you know how it works, it's fantastic, but you have to learn how to work with it and we have done so. So working as a team is excellent and the Japanese side in neurology is very highly sophisticated, organized, scientifically advanced team and we have absolutely no problem working with them.



PROF. RAAD SHAKIR

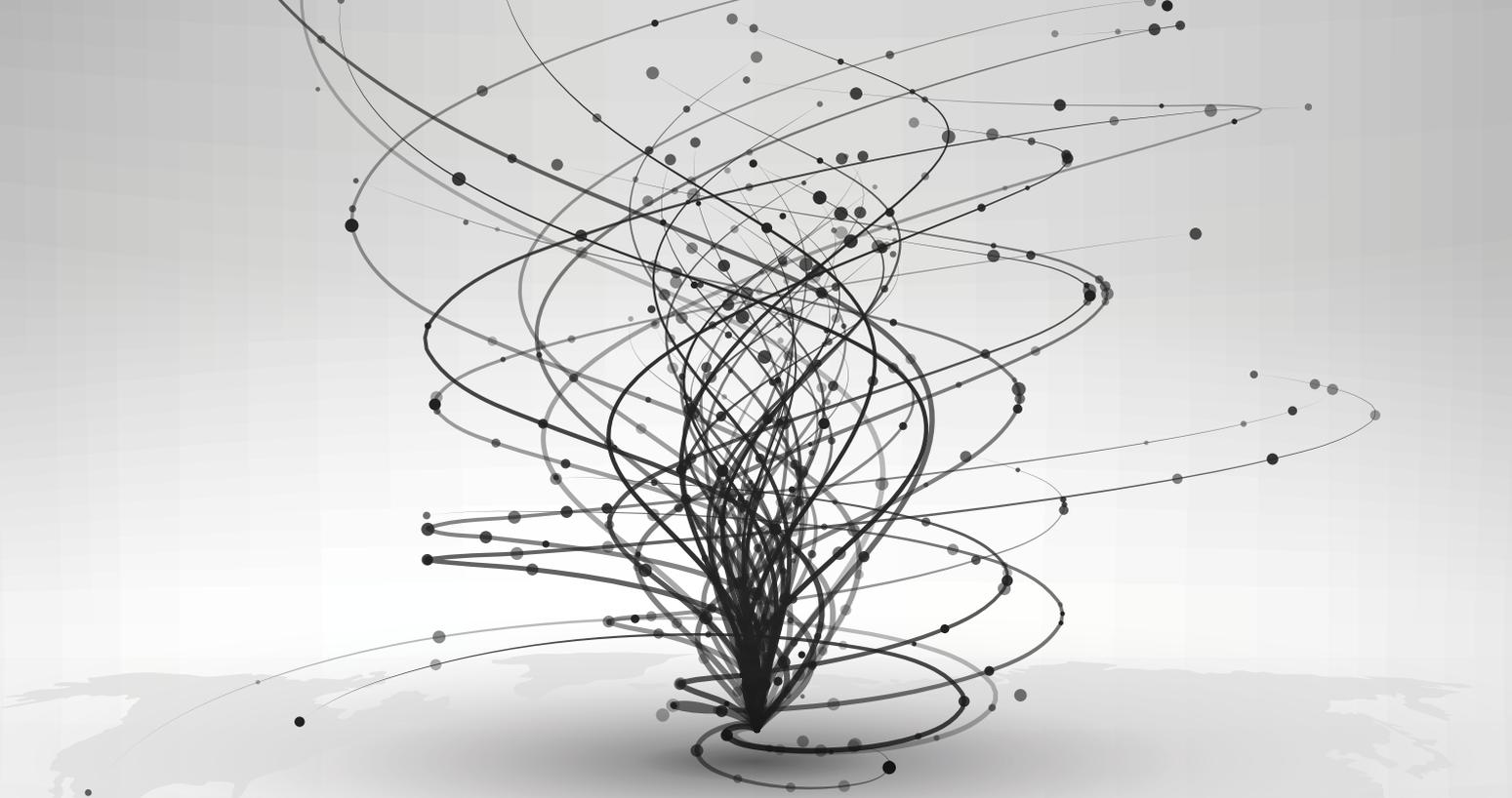


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HEADQUARTERS CREATES CLOSER TIES WITH LATIN AMERICA



Following the media partnership with FIEXPO, Headquarters Magazine has announced a new Strategic Partnership with Eventos Latinoamericanos, the only publication that specialises in the meetings market in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This exciting new partnership with the Punta del Este-based publication will focus on association news around the globe and will turn the spotlight on international congresses in Latin American destinations.

GLASGOW CONVENTION BUREAU



Images: University of Glasgow

GLASGOW, a city of medical innovation

Glasgow has been at the epicentre of medical innovation for centuries and today, maintains its world leading position in the field of medical research and practice.

Glasgow is home to the largest medical physics research division in the world, Europe's largest hospital (the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital) and the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre, the UK's most advanced NHS cancer centre.

When hosting a conference in Glasgow, meeting planners can work closely with our Conference Ambassadors – and in partnership with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, the private sector and our world-leading universities.

Get in touch:
glasgowconventionbureau.com

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WHERE IS THE BIGGEST CONVENTION CENTRE IN EUROPE? WELL, IN FASCINATING PARIS

At the end of last year I was extremely fortunate to experience a fantastic moment in Paris. Notwithstanding the stress preceding the opening of the new Paris Convention Centre, Stephanie Gay, Managing Director of Expo Porte de Versailles, made herself available to take me around a convention centre that can be called the biggest in Europe by a long stretch. And she didn't omit a single detail when explaining why she thinks this can be claimed. Marcel A.M. Vissers reports

AN INAUGURAL EVENT WITH STYLE AND PANACHE

It got quite busy at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles on 22 November 2017. Everyone had shifted into top gear to show off the new Paris Convention Centre to Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris. On that very day all the other mayors of France were also on site for a conference. I have never seen so many mayors together in a single location. There were some good vibes in the air. The day before the team of Viparis had shown me around some unusual places in Paris. NeuroSpin, a research centre devoted to nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) and neuroimaging, is just outside of Paris. I found this visit to be a fascinating experience and it goes to say that Paris is a lot more than just a world-famous tourist attraction.

In the evening we visited Le 24 Place des Vosges for a private peek at its historic art collection and enjoyed the chef's gastronomic treats. A definite must for any convention organiser.

THE PROMISING NEW LARGEST CONFERENCE CENTRE IN EUROPE

The Centre is located within the Paris Expo Porte de Versailles exhibition complex, which is undergoing a ten-year renovation project (2015–2025). The brand new venue, which will function in complement to the Palais des Congrès de Paris, means that the city of Paris can host the biggest world conferences. The venue offers a 5,200-seat plenary hall connected to 44,000 m² of exhibition space. The new centre will be able to host events bringing together more than 30,000 participants, some of them have already booked the Centre, and large-scale events are planned through 2022.

The plenary hall is the largest in Europe, and its glass roof means that conferences can be held in natural light. Every conference room is fully furnished with smart and adaptive speakers that offer high-quality sound and create an ideal acoustic environment for visitors. The Atrium conference rooms feature connected furniture and the latest audio-visual equipment.

Michel Dessolain, CEO of Viparis, stated during the opening ceremony: *"Viparis is focused on introducing innovation and flexibility at our sites and bringing them into the digital age. We constantly strive to provide the best service per square metre. Our goal is to host 75 events at Paris Convention Centre over the next five years, including 55 conferences - 15 of which are already booked. This new venue will help bolster Paris's influence and image on the world stage, and help the city retain its leading edge in the business tourism market."*

ABOUT VIPARIS

Viparis manages the ten main conference centres and exhibition/event venues in the Greater Paris region. Each year, Viparis welcomes an average of 10 million visitors (the general public, professionals and spectators) to a wide range of events at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles, Paris Le Bourget, Paris Nord Villepinte, Espace Champerret, Palais des Congrès de Paris, Palais des Congrès de Versailles, Palais des Congrès d'Issy, Carrousel du Louvre, Espace Grande Arche and the Hôtel Salomon de Rothschild and new the newly opened Paris Convention Centre at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles.

For more information, please visit :

WWW.VIPARIS.COM



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IN COPENHAGEN EVERYTHING IS CLOSER

Efficient infrastructure, a high level of service giving delegates a seamless experience and a wide array of world-class restaurants, hotels and venues within walking distance of each other.

These are just some of the many reasons why Copenhagen has become one of Europe's most popular destinations for business events. As the epicentre of the Greater Copenhagen region, Copenhagen is also the gateway to world-leading research clusters and universities across Denmark and Sweden.

It's incredible how close everything really is in Copenhagen. Denmark's capital is home to Europe's most efficient airport, only a 15-minute metro ride from the city centre. This means visitors waste very little time at the airport and can quickly get to and from Copenhagen. In addition, most of the city's hotels, venues and tourist attractions are within walking distance of each other, which means delegates never have to go far.

Copenhagen is also a hotbed of gastronomy and culture. Its annual Copenhagen Cooking and Food Festival has become one of the largest and most interesting food festivals in Northern Europe, while restaurants like Noma and Geranium have helped position Copenhagen as the gastronomic

capital of Scandinavia. Finally, visitors are never far from stunning modern architecture that can be found side by side with historical buildings.

WORLD-LEADING RESEARCH HUBS ACROSS TWO COUNTRIES

The closeness and easy access not only apply to venues and hotels, but also to the world-leading knowledge clusters located in Copenhagen and the Greater Copenhagen region.

Home to a population of 4 million across Denmark and Sweden, the Greater Copenhagen region boasts some of the most innovative knowledge hubs in life science and renewable energy, including the globally recognised Medicon Valley, which ranks among the world's leading research clusters for materials science and life sciences. It offers access to a deep talent pool of 40,000 highly qualified people working in the life science sector, 14,000 researchers and 6,000 PhD students in science, engineering and medicine as well as approximately 350 biotech, medtech and pharma companies with local R&D. All of this is

underpinned by life science-focused universities and a superb research infrastructure.

By attending an event in Copenhagen, delegates have a unique opportunity to get close to these clusters and forge new partnerships with knowledge institutions and companies, become part of living labs and co-creation and be introduced to new research projects. Distance is not an issue as everything in the Greater Copenhagen region can be reached within 90 minutes from Copenhagen - perfectly exemplified by the Öresund Bridge, connecting Denmark and Sweden with an approximately 16 km long road and rail link.

Getting to Copenhagen is just as easy and hassle-free as moving around the city. There are currently direct flights from 165 destinations. With everything within easy reach, it is no wonder that Copenhagen continues to be one of Europe's most popular MICE destinations.

MORE INFORMATION

 **COPENHAGEN CONVENTION BUREAU**

WWW.COPENHAGENCYVB.COM

[@copenhagencvb](https://twitter.com/copenhagencvb)

Copenhagen Meetingplanner Guide:
WWW.MEETINGPLANNERGUIDE.COM/#/

LONDON FOR MEDICAL CONGRESSES

In 2015, the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), one of the world's biggest cardiovascular congresses was held at ExCeL London, bringing a record-breaking 32,773 delegates from over 140 countries to London.

Then in November last year, the ESC announced that ESC Congress, the world's biggest gathering of heart specialists, will return to London for a second time in 2021, taking place at the iconic ExCeL London conference centre from 28 August – 1 September 2021, and bringing together health care professionals working towards reducing the burden of cardiovascular disease in Europe.

London overcame stiff competition from other key European cities in winning the event for 2021, and it's a huge vote of confidence in upholding London's position as a world-class city for medical events, as well as a leading centre for medical research and continuous education.

ESC Congress is dedicated to expanding the boundaries of cardiovascular medicine so that people can lead longer, healthier lives. For one week in August 2021, London will be the hub in this battle against heart disease, the number one killer in the world today, and we are proud to join forces with such a dynamic, forward thinking city.

Isabel Bardinet,
ESC's Chief Executive Officer

London has a track-record of successfully hosting high-profile, and large-scale medical conferences. Besides the ESC, London has recently welcomed Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) with more than 5,600 attendees, European Association of Urology (EAU) with over 12,600 delegates, and the 22nd World Congress of International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO); providing settings that allow the world's leading researchers, scientists and medical experts to share information in the field.

CONGRESSES CHOOSING LONDON CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO A FEW KEY ASPECTS:

FLEXIBLE RESOURCES - London has over 1000 inspiring event venues and phenomenal conference centres, with more than 153,000 hotel rooms that range from budget to boutique across the city. There are numerous London venues and hotels that are appropriate for hosting events bound by the ABPI Code of Practice for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, and a pool of experienced catering suppliers and event planners that understand the code and implications on their event and congress activity.

Some of London's first-class institutions also provide flexible and suitable event spaces. Wellcome Collection is where event space, library and museum make



an inspirational combination. Many other medical institutions also have first class facilities, such as the purposely built Royal College of Physicians for conferences, meetings, banquets, trainings and outdoor events.

London & Partners, the official promotional agency and convention bureau for the British capital, works with the venue partners to support organisers in requirements such as limited spend per head, signage or management of registration fee payments.

CONNECTIVITY – London's international appeal as a destination is boosted by its excellent accessibility and connectivity. Hundreds of direct flights from 336 international destinations come to six London international airports, supplied by a variety of legacy and low cost carriers that ensure there is transportation to match every budget.

London has an excellent public transportation network for delegates to travel around the city, and is constantly in development. By the time ESC Congress returns to London in 2021, ExCeL London will be served directly by the new Elizabeth line station Custom House, allowing delegates to access the rest of London in record time. International delegates will be able to travel from Heathrow direct to ExCeL London in 44 minutes and reach the West End in merely 15 minutes.

MEDICAL EXCELLENCE – Known as the Golden Triangle of life sciences, London, along with Cambridge, Oxford and the greater South East region of England combines a renowned scientific base with world-class clinicians and hospitals, offering an unparalleled mix of expertise, resources, institutions, funding, education and collaborations.

London's cutting-edge facilities include five world class medical schools and 14 teaching hospitals, 3 of 15 Clinical Research Networks in England. The city is home to 230 healthcare companies, 1,365 life sciences companies, and 494 biotech companies, there are nearly 55,000 life science employees in London.

The strong medical presence means a wealth of possibilities for event planners. Organisers can enjoy outstanding networking potential and access to the expertise and minds behind the impressive innovation and research. With the help of the London Convention Bureau, some of these respected institutions can provide speakers, ensuring your conference is a memorable experience.

GOVERNMENT AND POLICY SUPPORT – Collaboration is another key ingredient for attracting medical meetings in London. A congress alone cannot work unless the city, the venue and the network of organisers work in fantastic partnership. London & Partners can offer this service of uniting the venues and civic organisations to make the right introductions, making London congresses a real success.

Many key agencies and regulation agencies are also based in London, including the European Medicine Agency, Medical and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and Medical Research Council (MRC); the regulations that ensure events are safe, reliable, cutting edge and dedicated are written in London.

London offers an unparalleled mix of expertise, resources, facilities and collaboration, providing a perfect eco-system for medical meetings from planning to operation.

ABOUT THE LONDON CONVENTION BUREAU

Our associations team offers:

- ✓ Free, impartial advice about venues, hotels, PCOs and DMCs
- ✓ Accommodation housing service
- ✓ Bid assistance
- ✓ Group discounts on travel to/in London
- ✓ Delegate offers and visitor information
- ✓ Use of London & Partners' boardroom

Suzanne Singleton, Head of Associations at the London Convention Bureau, said: "London has so much to offer to event planners looking to host medical and pharma meetings. With a world class life sciences cluster, a range of pharma-compliant venues and accommodations and the fantastic transport links the city provides, there is no better host city for event planners. We already have a number of leading industry events planned for this year and our team of experts look forward to helping event professionals bring many more to London."

CONTACT THE TEAM
FOR FREE IMPARTIAL ADVICE

LONDON
CONVENTION BUREAU

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CONVENTIONBUREAU.LONDON/

[ASSOCIATIONS](https://www.linkedin.com/company/associations)

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UNEXPECTED VISIT TO LVIV

It would never have entered my mind to travel to Ukraine to check out the meetings industry. However, when I received the city of Lviv's invitation last year to attend the 17th ICCA Central European Chapter Summer Meeting I thought I might give it a try. After locating the city on a map, I was captivated in no time. Lviv, a little known city in the west of Ukraine, delighted me in many ways and for many things... Marcel A. M. Vissers reports

WHAT DOES CENTRAL EUROPE REPRESENT FOR THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY?

It is not an easy task to define Central Europe. However, knowing that cities like Budapest, Vienna and Prague take a central position is a good starting point. And perhaps we should also add Kyiv. All these cities have some connection to the Emperor. Lina Ostapchuk, Director of the Lviv Convention Bureau, gave me an excellent description. Lviv, also known as Lemberg, has had many names over time, reflecting the city's troubled history and positioning it as a landmark of Central Europe's cultural and historical heritage.

Lina Ostapchuk: "If you have never been to Lviv before, you might feel like you are getting a glimpse into an old world, primarily because of the eclectic architecture, the narrow cobblestone walkways and music playing everywhere in the city centre. The café society, so common in Europe, is widespread in Lviv and you will likely feel at home embraced by the international culture that has been a part of this region for centuries".

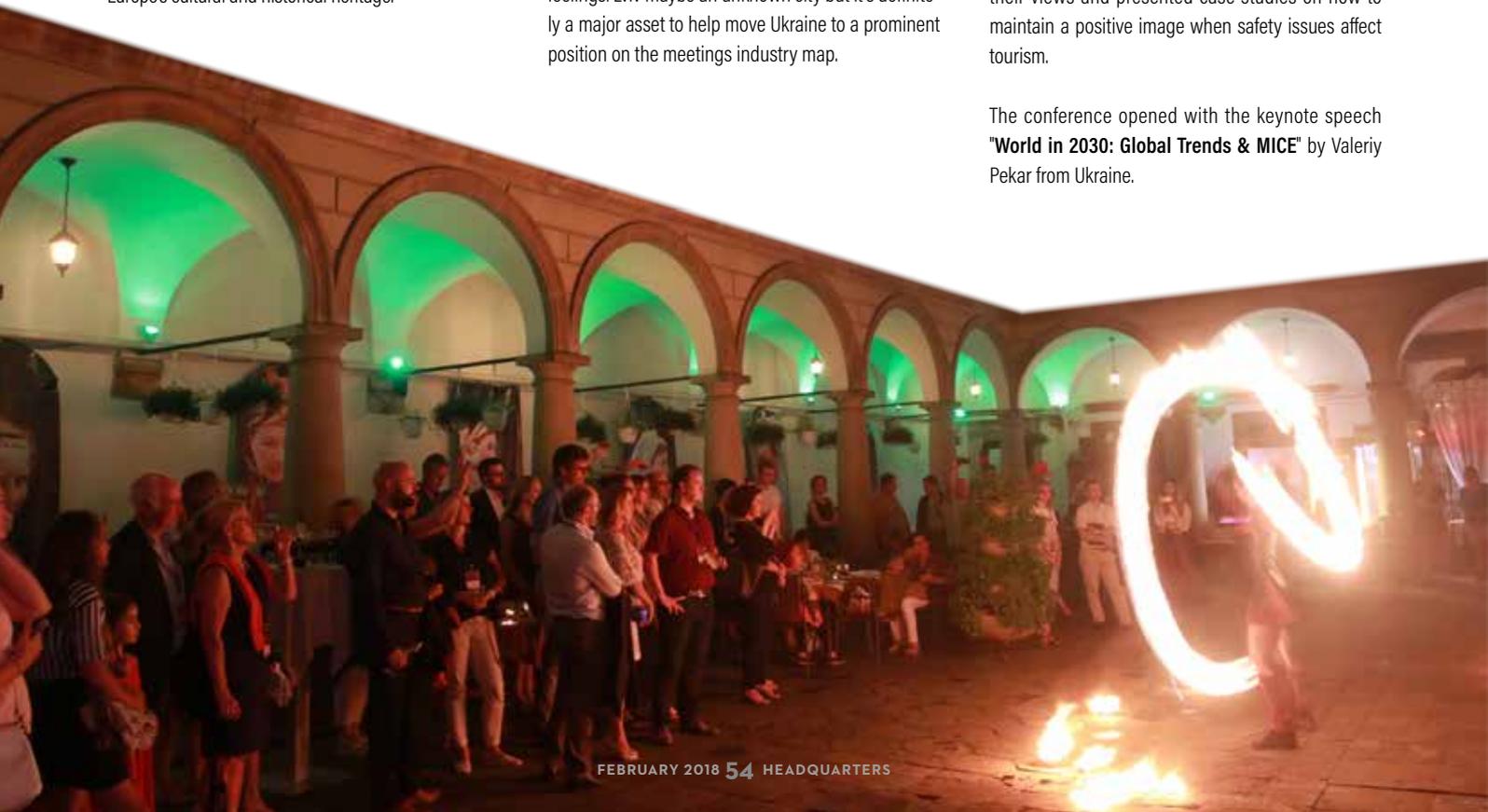
I think that all participants went away with similar feelings. Lviv maybe an unknown city but it's definitely a major asset to help move Ukraine to a prominent position on the meetings industry map.

WHAT IS SAFETY AND SECURITY IN OUR INDUSTRY?

The event was attended by 60 participants from 10 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in particular Poland, Germany, Austria and others.

The central theme of the event was "**Safety and Security of Our Meetings**". Panelists focused on the definition of security and discussed risk management techniques. Experienced conference organisers from Germany, Poland, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine shared their views and presented case studies on how to maintain a positive image when safety issues affect tourism.

The conference opened with the keynote speech "**World in 2030: Global Trends & MICE**" by Valeriy Pekar from Ukraine.



One of the panels, "How to develop a successful strategy to make sure our meetings are safe?" focused on discussions of risk management techniques. Moderated by Anna Górska, experienced conference organizers from Germany, Poland and Ukraine - Stefan Lohnert, Anna Jędrocha, Krzysztof Zieniewicz, and Olexandr Filts - shared their views and case studies with the audience.

During a brief session on cybersecurity moderated by Anton Skrypnyk, Mykhaylo Shmelyov from Microsoft (National Technology officer for CEE Multicountry Europe at Microsoft, Ukraine) and Jaanika Merilo, expert in innovations and e-services from Estonia and Ukraine, talked about cybercrime and innovative IT solutions for organising large-scale events.

Tina Altieri from Singapore presented "Top six strategies you should know when dealing with and handling an incident" during a Skype session.

A RICH SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAM

Since many of the participants were not very familiar with the beauty of Lviv nor Ukrainian culture in general, the conference was complemented with a series of cultural events. One of the highlights was definitely the Retro car tour. Apparently Retro cars are very much the fashion in Lviv. It's not unusual for owners of vintage cars to make them available for tours through the old city. A rather pleasant experience that I was able to get a taste of on a number of occasions. But the highlight of my trip to Lviv must have been the opening of the Mozart Festival in the magnificent Lviv Opera House. Here people still dress up to go to a concert. Also, please forgive me... I had never heard any music composed by Franz, Mozart's eldest son. Listening to 'First day of Spring' I thought I would remember Lviv as a fresh, healthy and pure city.

WHAT IS STILL MISSING IN LVIV?

A convention centre. However, there is hope! The Lviv multi-purpose complex is an investment project with high social significance. The project involves the construction of a conference facility with a capacity of up to 2,000 attendees as well as other activities such as concerts (for 7,000 seats), sports events (up to 5,000 visitors) and exhibitions (area up to 5,000 m2.). It is designed to generate sizable economic and social benefits to a diverse range of stakeholders, starting with local SMEs and extending to the broader beneficiaries of Ukraine's increasing integration into the international community.



NEXT YEAR

Next year the ICCA CEC Summer Meeting will take place in cooperation with Meetings Experts Conference (MEXCON) from 20 to 22 June 2018 in Wiesbaden, Germany.



OSLO

A CITY FOR ALL SEASONS

The annual VIPeace fam trip wasn't all about the Nobel Peace Prize. Visit OSLO managed to pack an amazing lot into three days, showcasing the capital's wonderful nature, culinary delights as well as sophisticated accommodation and venues. *Words by Katie Lau*

A compact and culturally vibrant city, Oslo is home to Norwegian masters like Ibsen and Munch, many famous attractions and certainly, the Nobel Peace Prize Award (all the other Nobel Prize winners are awarded in Stockholm). Arguably one of Scandinavia's more low-key capitals, Oslo is in fact one of the fastest-growing cities in Europe, hosting about 300 congresses per year with capacity to host meetings for up to 7,000 delegates.

It was my first visit to Oslo, which I discovered to be destination in its own right offering plenty of unique attractions and experiences. I joined a group of about 30 buyers and several other journalists in a three-day fam trip featuring a series of Nobel Peace Prize-related special activities that culminated with a musical tribute on December 11.

A PEACE-LOVING CITY

The 2017 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), for its "ground-breaking efforts" to secure a prohibition on such weapons. It's hard not to be shaken by the thought-provoking nuclear sites photographs by Singaporean visual artist Sim Chi Yin, shown as part of the Ban the Bomb exhibition at the Nobel Peace Centre. The exhibition also features personal belongings of victims of the Nagasaki and Hiroshima atomic bombings in 1945, which are shown in Northern Europe for the first time.

In addition, the Centre boasts event spaces of different sizes in inspiring surroundings suitable for a variety of events from workshops for up to 70 people to a standing reception for up to 450 people.

Delegates were also invited to take part in a traditional torch light procession where participants walked from Oslo Central Station through the Karl Johans Gate towards the Grand Hotel, where winners stand on the balcony to receive ovations from the public. It was a magical experience holding torches (real flames!) in the freezing cold to convey a message of hope (while trying not to set anyone on fire by accident). Over 10,000 guests continued the celebration at The Nobel Peace Prize Concert at Telenor Arena, featuring singers John Legend and Zara Larsson.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

For a city with just about 670,000 inhabitants, Oslo boasts a wide variety of museums and attractions such as The National Art Gallery (featuring the classic "Scream" by Edvard Munch), The Vigeland Sculpture



Park (exhibiting Gustav Vigeland's uniquely bizarre pieces), The Oslo City Hall (where the award ceremony took place), and The Oslo Opera House, which has become a foremost attraction for locals and visitors alike since its opening in 2008. Resembling a glacier rising from the waters of the Oslo Fjord, the post-modern building is home to Norwegian National Opera & Ballet featuring a walkable marble-clad rooftop, three auditoriums, a spectacular foyer and 14 meeting rooms. The guided backstage tour is also available and highly recommended.

Besides operas, Oslo attracts thousands of musicians and fans throughout the year thanks to its abundance of concerts and festivals such as The Norwegian Wood Music Festival and Oslo Jazz Festival.



OUTDOOR FUN

Lying between the beautiful Oslo Fjord and the charming forests, Oslo provides ample opportunities for outdoor recreation, from sailing and hiking in the summer to alpine and cross-country skiing in the winter. We spent a memorable morning at the iconic Holmenkollen Ski Museum and Jump Tower, only a 20-minute metro ride away from the city centre. After admiring the panoramic views of snow-covered Oslo on the observation deck, we began a series of fantastic team-building activities including rappelling, quiz-solving and target shooting, before being treated to an electrifying performance by Salto Mortale, a Norwegian jazz band, at the chapel. Then we had lunch at the impressive Scandic Holmenkollen Park Hotel. Surrounded by mountainous woods, the hotel is a perfect venue for all types of conferences and events for up to 850 participants.

The best way to explore Oslo's attraction is by a guided bus or boat tour. We took a short cruise on the fjord offered by Norway Yacht Charter from the City Hall dock to FRAM Museum, which houses the famous Norwegian 19th century polar exploration ship and boasts many unique spaces for events, such as the polar ship deck, saloons, and a conference room. The entire museum can host about 1100 guests.



WINE AND DINE

Oslo embraces the use of local ingredients such as fish and seafood, which is the speciality of the elegant waterfront Lofoten restaurant, where we had a lovely lunch. There are also local delicacies like mutton, elk and reindeer. A good place for Mathallen Food Hall is an indoor food market with more than 30 specialty shops, cafés and eateries in Vulkan, a former industrial area that has transformed into a trendy upcoming neighbourhood. Needless to say, most venues and conference centres can be supplemented with food and drink from the in-house restaurants.

FABULOUS ACCOMMODATION

Oslo has over 12,500 hotel rooms, ranging from first-class luxurious hotels such as Grand Hotel and the Hotel Continental to business hotels like Radisson Blu Scandinavia, Scandic St. Olavs and Thon Hotel Rosenkrantz, whose room price includes a well-acclaimed breakfast and an evening meal on the top floor.

EASY ACCESSIBILITY

As Norway is in the Schengen Area, arriving and transferring from Europe requires no passport or security checks at Oslo airport, which is served by more than 150 domestic and international destinations (only two hours away from Brussels, for example). The Airport Express train takes visitors into the city centre in just less than 20 minutes. The Oslo Pass, which includes free public transport and free entrance to museum and sights, is a great way to save time and money.



MORE INFORMATION

CONGRESS@VISITOSLO.COM
WWW.VISITOSLO.COM/EN/MEETINGS/

PCMA CONVENING LEADERS 2018 IN NASHVILLE MILESTONES TO BE REMEMBERED

PCMA was off to a great start with its flagship event that saw a series of senior-level promotions and appointments while setting new records in revenues, fundraising, and delegate attendance. The special occasion was also marked by an eye-opening showcase of the latest event technology, meeting design and business event strategy. Words by Katie Lau

Nashville, Tennessee was the host city for PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) Convening Leaders this year, which took place on January 7-10 at the Music City Centre and attracted a record number of about 4,400 delegates from across America and abroad to a wide range of inspiring sessions, networking events, and learning opportunities.

For PCMA, 2017 was a very good year with revenues shooting up to \$19 million USD (from \$6 million USD in 2006) with partnership activity contributing \$6.5 million USD in 2017. The July 2017 acquisition of the Singapore-based Incentive, Conference & Event Society Asia Pacific (ICESAP), also strengthened their revenue streams and brands.

The growth of PCMA has also been supported by the PCMA Education Foundation, which raised a record \$1.83 million USD from a range of activities during 2017 with \$493,000 USD being awarded in scholarships and grants during the same year.

EXCEPTIONAL GROWTH

PCMA more than doubled its membership (to 7,000 currently) and revenue under Deborah Sexton's 12-year leadership as CEO. Former COO Sherrif Karamat, who took over Sexton's position at the conclusion of the event, told HQ that apart from America, PCMA is very serious about their growth in Asia Pacific, including Chinese-speaking regions. Citing the 4th Annual ICESAP Conference in Shanghai last September, he said, "About 70% of the attendees were Chinese. Our textbooks on professional meeting management were translated into Chinese and being taught at university level."

Nashville
MUSIC CITY



The event also saw the appointment of Claire Smith, vice-president of sales and marketing for the Vancouver Convention Centre, as Chairperson of the Board of Directors. For the newly appointed team, raising the level of education, engagement and collaboration is a top priority. "We like to change the language that we use, maybe focus more on outcomes, not just what we do, but the impact of what we do, so our efforts can be recognised more, it's not easy task, and we have to take a different approach," Karamat said.

ENGAGEMENT "SUPERSIZED"

There's no doubt that PCMA was serious about their commitment to "amplifying engagement" – the slogan of this year's Convening Leaders. It was not just about quantity, but quality too – which applied in the way they embraced the most out-of-the-box ideas in event technology, design and strategy. The Future of Face2Face, an area dedicated to emerging technologies and trends that will shape in-person engagement, is an excellent case in point. Its centrepiece, The Mix, was an oversized media display that captured everyone's attention as soon as they walked into the room. This 65-foot-by-18-foot wall of HD screens allowed attendees to "channel surf" streaming up to 12 concurrent sessions while networking with their peers and sipping their coffee. "Technology will continue to play a bigger role in the future of face-to-face as interactive technologies, augmented, virtual, and mixed-reality evolve and become the norm. The Mix is just one application of technology that gives attendees the chance to gather, network, and still experience what is going on everywhere in the venue and potentially elsewhere," said John Kennedy, Freeman's executive vice president and COO.

The concept was testament to PCMA's continuous efforts to find new unique ways to keep delegates engaged. Smith said of the Mix, "It's about letting the delegates experience the event in what works for them, not forcing everybody to go to one place at one time, but giving them the choice to get the content the way they want." What's more is the concept can be scaled and customised to any size or display technology according to the client's requirements and budget.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS

A line-up of high-profile Main Stage speakers also helped turn up the volume of engagement, including Neri Oxman, an award-winning designer who looked to nature for practical design solutions; retired U.S. Army General Stanley McChrystal, who presented his thoughts on successful leadership in today's complex world; and social innovator and philanthropist Bill Strickland, who shared his message of self-worth restored faith in ethical leadership and reshaped the business of social change.

Other highlights include a networking luncheon featuring Hilton President and CEO Chris Nassetta; the "Party With a Purpose" fundraiser, benefiting the PCMA Education Foundation, PCMA's Giving Good and the W.O. Smith Community School of Music; and the Closing Night Celebration, held at the Musicians Hall of Fame and GRAMMY Museum Gallery featuring live music by award-winning artists Peter Frampton, Gordon Kennedy, Little Big Town and delicious food from Nashville's best chef-driven restaurants.

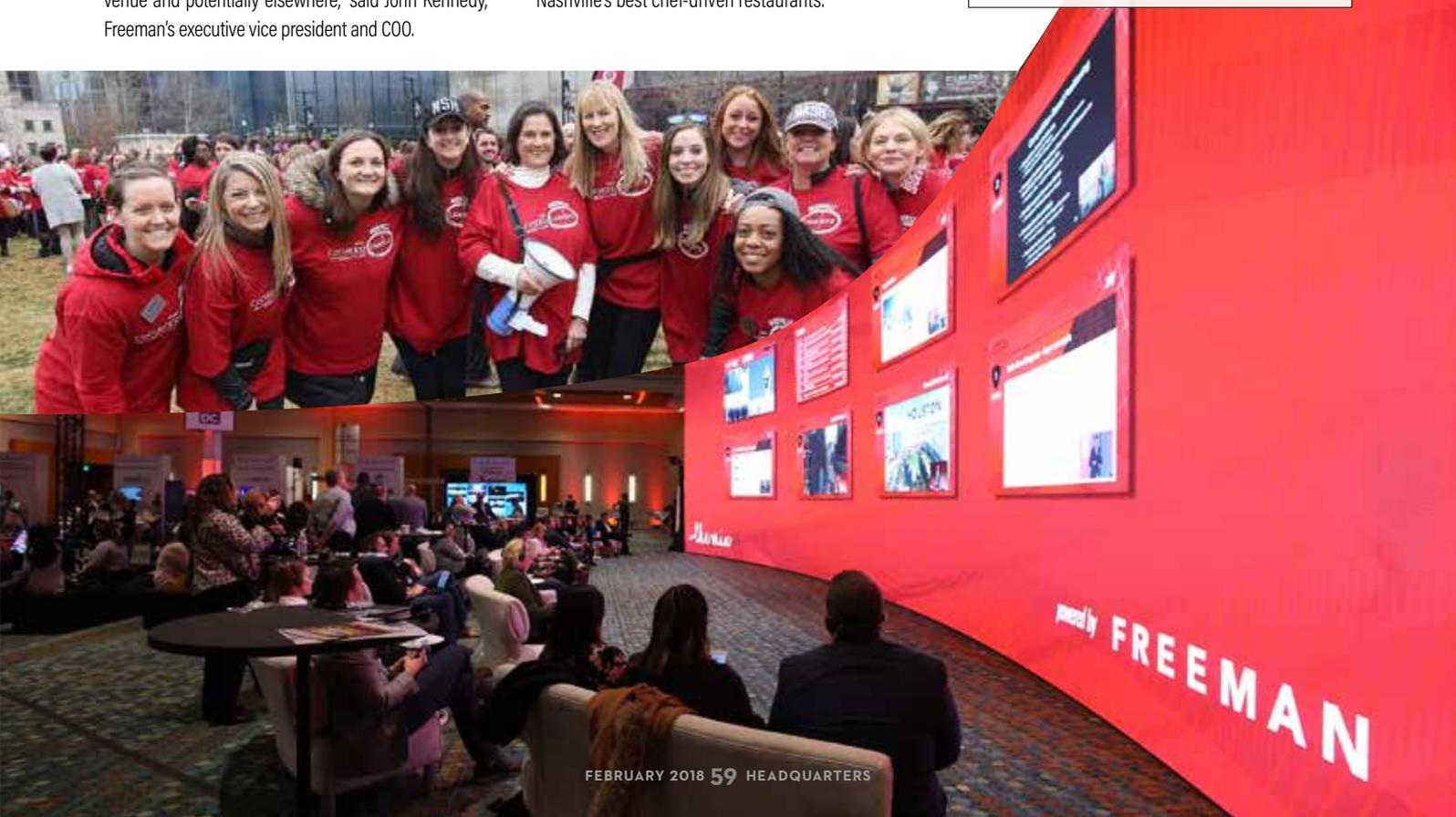
GUINNESS WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT

PCMA saved the quirkiest for last when it comes to amplifying community engagement: a Guinness World Record attempt for the largest human image of a musical instrument. Hundreds of attendees braved the cold and paraded over to the Music City Walk of Fame Park on the morning of January 10 forming the shape of a giant guitar while dancing to popular music hits played by a nearby DJ. Unfortunately the attempt did not succeed, but delegates were leaving Nashville with a smiling face and an inspired mind!



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EVENT

CONVENINGLEADERS.ORGTY



DUBAI IS ALWAYS ON THE MOVE

Dubai somehow always manages to catch the attention of convention organisers. Mid-December 2017 the city hosted two major events: The Middle East Meetings Forum and the Dubai Association Conference. Both events had a very strong educational program and had some good speakers lined up. What did I learn from them? *Marcel A. M. Vissers reports*

A HIGH LEVEL REGIONAL MEETINGS FORUM

The first activity on my itinerary was the Middle East Meetings Forum in Dubai World Trade Centre which included a full day educational event for the local Dubai meetings industry partners.

This Regional Meetings Forum is known as a high level, one day conference organized by ICCA and PCMA and hosted by Dubai Business Events. The Forum was attended by 120 participants, all ICCA members and industry partners from the entire Middle East Region. ICCA's Regional Director Senthil Gopinath put in a great deal of commitment to make this event a success. But then the development of the meetings industry in itself has turned into a major success story. According to Senthil Gopinath 'the Middle East is the fastest growing region for hosting international association meetings. Globally, the number of association meetings has doubled in a decade: from just under 6,000 in 2006 to over 12,000 in 2016. The market share of the Middle East region has grown even quicker: from 100 to 255 in a decade. This growth of over 250% is the largest for any region in the world.

The estimated total number of participants in the Middle East has grown from just 100,000 in 2007 to an average of almost 200,000 in the last 5 years. Most meetings were about medical sciences and technology. The number of technological meetings is higher than in other parts of the world.'

DUBAI ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE: A LEADING EVENT

Following the Forum, the Dubai Association Conference took place at Dubai World Trade Centre. Steen Jakobsen, Managing Director of the Dubai Convention Bureau explained why the conference was just as important as the location: 'This is the first event of its kind in the region. Focusing on building a community for associations, this conference is bringing together association executives, government representatives, university faculties and students, as well as professionals who are interested in forming associations. Economies in the Middle East are rapidly growing, and many reforms and strategies are in place allowing associations to take advantage of the increasing opportunities in the region.

Dubai Association Conference is a perfect opportunity for professionals from regional and international associations to gain insights into the latest market trends and to learn how Dubai is growing its association community.

EXPLORING DUBAI IN ITS ENTIRETY

The two-day programme of the Dubai Association Conference took place at Dubai World Trade Centre on 11 and 12 December and attracted over 300 delegates, including associations and industry experts, from 32 countries. It focused on the following:

- ▶ How associations should deal with business disruption and government reforms
- ▶ Collaboration between associations, corporations, academia and government
- ▶ How associations can successfully involve future generations

All delegates were invited to explore Dubai in its entirety from business to culture to heritage and entertainment.



TWO DAYS OF GREAT LEARNING

Day one of the conference focused on further building the association community and showcasing Dubai's vision for the future. In the event's opening session, His Excellency Helal Saeed Al Marri, Director General of Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing and Dubai World Trade Centre, said: 'The inaugural Dubai Association Conference marked an important step in Dubai's journey to becoming a key hub for associations. The combination of international and local speakers provided a rich programme for all delegates and the strong attendance reflected the enthusiasm for knowledge sharing and professional development in this field.'

Almost 50 associations have already established a presence here through the Dubai Association Centre, with many more in the process of setting up or expressing an interest in joining.'

Day Two of the conference focused on skills development for association executives and sharing best practices from around the world in order to provide attendees with the required tools to succeed.

'The Impact of Associations', a session delivered by Susan Robertson, President of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Foundation, highlighted how associations have a unique opportunity to make great contributions to their country's economy, competitiveness, and quality of life.

'The role that we all play is to make the world better, smarter and safer – that is the work of associations around the world. When I think about the potential of all of us in this room and the broader community that we connect with, it's enormous. We have the power to affect resources, knowledge and practices around the world, and the more we unite together to do that, the better off the world will be' said Robertson.

In another session titled 'The Future – Associations & Government Unite', Dr Noah Raford, COO and Futurist-in-Chief at Dubai Future Foundation and Dr Samir Hamrouni, CEO of World Free Zones Organization, discussed how associations and governments can work together and how they are embracing new technology.

'30 years ago, Dubai and the UAE were a 100% oil-based economy; today oil contributes to just 30% of the [UAE] economy. So, the Dubai journey started with a huge effort of diversification, by seeing what is happening outside and investing heavily to diversify the economy within the UAE' Dr. Hamrouni told the audience.



The Dubai Association Centre was established in the beginning of 2014 under a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) and Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), with the aim to provide assistance to professional associations to set up office space and develop their activities and membership in Dubai and beyond.

DAC allows a formal environment where international non-profit, scientific and professional associations can form a membership-based community and open a regional representative office to conduct business in the UAE and the wider Middle East region.

Speaking during a session titled 'Creating Engagement Through Purpose, Passion and a Picture of the Future', Greg Bogue noted that 48 per cent of consumers seek experiences with more substance, highlighting market trends towards authenticity, connection, self-expression and simplicity. Bogue, Vice President of Experience Design, Martiz Global Events, said: 'If people are changing, what about associations? We're moving from information to engagement; from programmes to people; from content to community.'



ICCA Board Member Mahir Julfar of the Dubai International Convention Exhibition Centre



DUBAI

MORE INFORMATION

WWW.VISITDUBAI.COM

KLCC TEAM GEARED UP FOR WUF9 WITH 25,000 ANTICIPATED VISITORS TO THE CENTRE!

THE VENUE OF CHOICE FOR THE NINTH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM

The Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre was all prepped and ready to kick-off its biggest event for 2018, the United Nation-Habitat's Ninth Session of World Urban Forum (WUF9) from 7 to 13 February, further growing the venue's international high-profile event portfolio. The official opening ceremony took place on 8th February and was officiated by YAB Dato' Seri Najib Tun Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Themed **"Cities 2030 - Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda"**, the Forum focused on discussing the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as a tool and accelerator for achieving the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

With the Seventh Session of the World Urban forum held in Medellin, Colombia recording over 18,000 participation, the current edition of the Forum converged at least 25,000 participants from national, regional and local governments, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, professionals, research institutions and academies, professionals, private sector,

development finance institutions, foundations, media and United Nations organizations at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

The Centre's General Manager, Alan Pryor, shared, *"We are delighted to be the venue of choice for this highly important and prestigious international event and our team are passionate about delivery and applying their knowledge and expertise to address the complexity of the event. The exposure and legacy this event creates is not only a win for us but also for Malaysia and the region."*

For the duration of the event, as per the organiser's protocol, the Centre is handed over to the United Nations which puts the venue and its surrounding of approximately 50m under UN territory for seven days.

The Centre is reputed to be the host of many

international high-profile events in the past years and being recognized as a world-class purpose-built venue with industry standard accreditations and a track record that attest to its suitability for events of this stature. These include distinguished high-profile government events such as the Malaysia-China Economic Summit, 26th and 27th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits; and the 128th International Olympic Committee Session to name a few.



KUALA LUMPUR
CONVENTION CENTRE

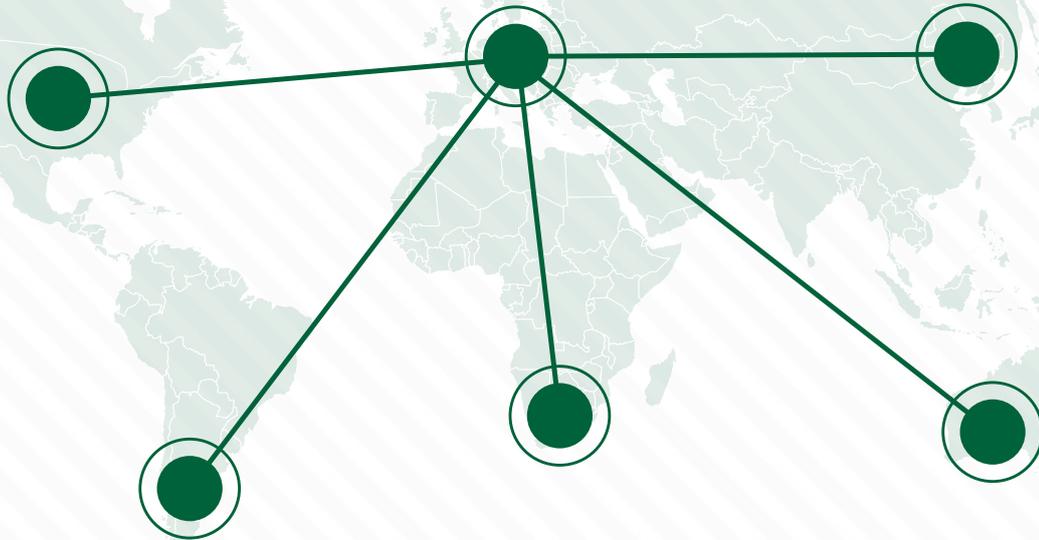
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WWW.KLCCCONVENTIONCENTRE.COM



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

The award-winning Headquarters Magazine (HQ), the Association Magazine, is widely considered a leading resource for meeting planners worldwide with its diverse content featuring destination reports, interviews, customised supplements as well as latest industry news and insights.



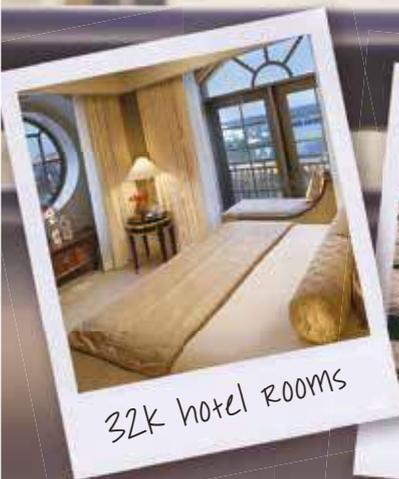
Based in Brussels, the capital of Europe and the hub for international and European associations, the niche English-language publication brings a European perspective and sensibility to the coverage of the meeting industry.

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