



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

Headquarters

MAY 2018 - N°83

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**AUCKLAND
AUSTRALASIA'S LEADING
BUSINESS EVENT DESTINATION**

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AND REALITIES EXPLAINED**

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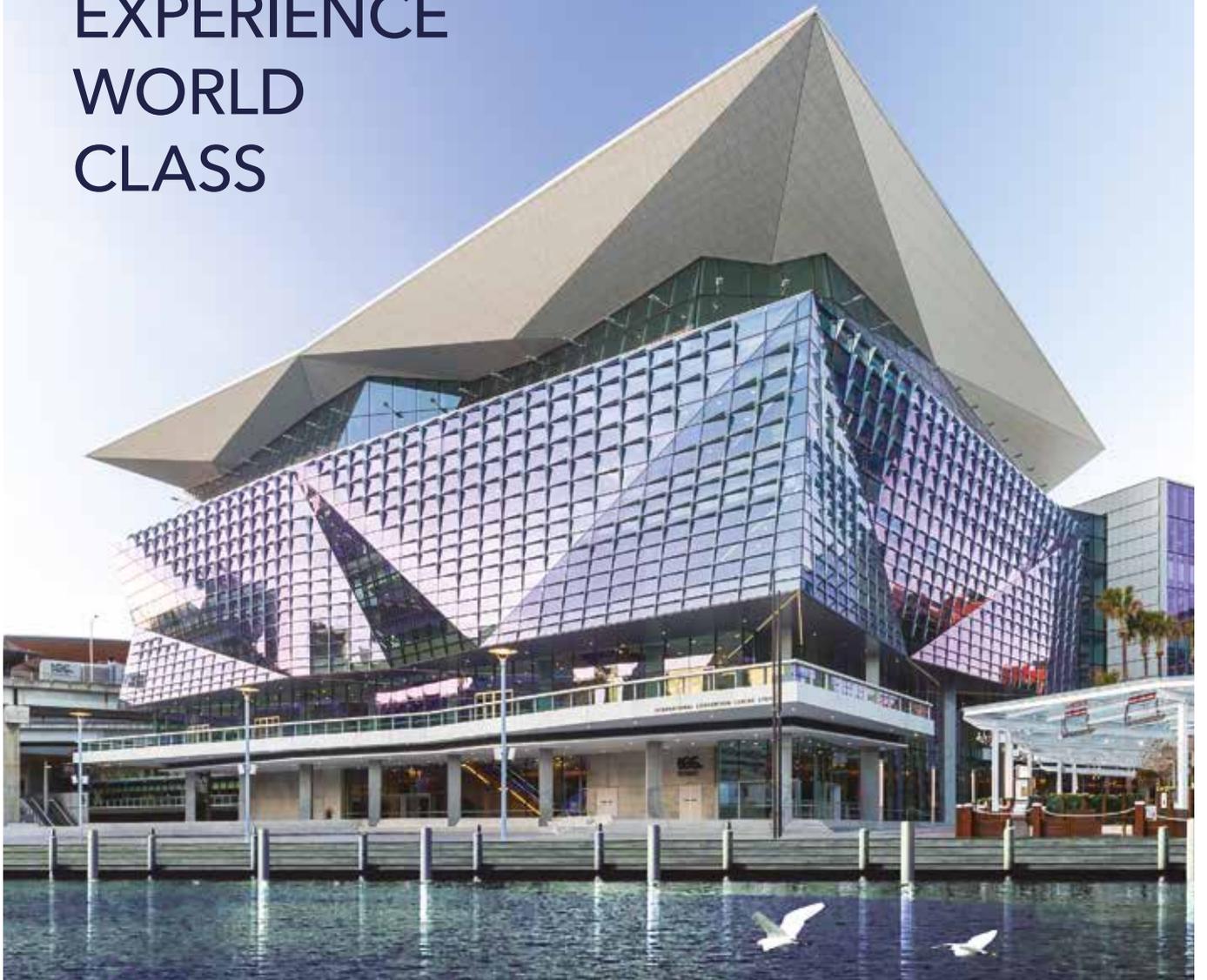
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CREATE A LASTING LEGACY IN AUSTRALIA

The impact of business events on a city has never been as topical as it is now. Convention centres in Australia recognise the importance of this impact and are paving the way for events to leave a lasting legacy in the host city.

Driving economic impact and strengthening a city's knowledge economy are well known consequences of hosting major business events for a city, and venues are already playing a leading role in achieving these benefits.

ICC Sydney believes venues can make a deeper impact – an impact they call the third wave. This involves working hand-in-hand with clients to give back to the communities in which they operate and focusing on the legacy that events can leave behind for future generations.

Discussions about the obligations and engagement of business events has already begun and ICC Sydney is at the forefront of these conversations, taking action with its multi-streamed Legacy Program. This Australian first initiative supports clients to deliver impactful end-to-end experiences by connecting the world's visiting minds, industry leaders and delegates with Sydney's diverse local community.

Results of the Legacy Program are felt long after the convention, exhibition and networking events have taken place, and gives the opportunity for ICC Sydney's clients to partner with locals in meaningful

way. The four legacy streams - Innovators & Entrepreneurs, Generation Next, First Australians and Sustainable Events, encapsulate the venue's commitment to fostering positive social impacts through events hosted.

Australia is home to a network of entrepreneurs and startups, and ICC Sydney's Legacy Program gives clients direct exposure to these. From fostering the next generation of thought leaders via student engagement to working with local First Nation businesses and measuring the ecological impact of events, the venue is committed to developing dedicated initiatives to deliver long-term social, economic and environmental outcomes and world class events.

From the very first day of engagement, ICC Sydney's team works collaboratively with clients and their network of partners to develop a bespoke program, including components from each of the four streams. ICC Sydney is the connection and support point between event organisers, local organisations and businesses.

Most importantly, the Legacy Program will be a systematic and measurable way of assessing outcomes while also ensuring transparency and

authenticity when connecting ICC Sydney's clients with locals.

The importance and power of business events cannot be underestimated in their ability to build the intellectual capital and reputation of a country, and city.

With its new Legacy Program, ICC Sydney is even better placed to help deliver memorable event experiences, drive positive social impact, support economic and environmental outcomes across the board and deepen relationships with leading thinkers and innovators visiting Australia.



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A FRESH APPROACH

“A CONFERENCE NEEDS TO CHANGE 10% EVERY YEAR. A LOT OF ASSOCIATIONS HAVEN’T CHANGED IN 20 YEARS.”

Brett Jeffery, New Zealand General Manager of the Australasian Society of Association Executives

Many associations see no reason to depart from the “way they have always done things”. But change is increasingly important to stay ahead of competitors – one of the greatest challenges for associations.

In its 2017 Economic Impact on Associations Report, McKinley Advisors found that increasing competition was one of the most prevalent concerns among associations in the US. Associations were more worried about competition than in previous studies, with 73 per cent of respondents reporting this was an issue, a 31 per cent increase from 2016. They were also increasingly concerned about membership retention (13 per cent increase), with the latter being the biggest perceived challenge.

The picture is similar in Australasia, too: research conducted by the Australasian Society of Association Executives in March 2017 also found that competition was the biggest external challenge for its members.

Not surprisingly, churning out the same conference in the same venue with the same speakers year in year out is not the way to win friends and influence members. Innovation is key and the payoff is multi-fold: beginning with increased audience numbers and profits, but reaching as far as strengthening membership.

Originality, freshness, creativity – all are essential in broadening the appeal of a conference, which is vital against the backdrop of challenges around declining audiences and association membership.

TAKE A NEW LOOK AT NEW ZEALAND

New ideas

If content is king, why not tap into some of the best brains in the business? New Zealand offers world-leading knowledge hubs in sectors including agribusiness, high-value food and beverage, marine, aviation, health sciences, earth sciences, tourism, ICT and digital. Use our thought leaders and academics as speakers. Incorporate field trips to our leading institutions into your programme; or visit an innovative business to see ideas in action. Engage with local specialists in your field to widen your network and enhance your knowledge-sharing opportunities.



New horizons

New Zealand's stunning scenery is world-renowned and awe-inspiring. This 'bucket-list' destination tempts international visitors with snow-capped mountains, golden beaches, rolling vineyards, boiling mud pools, cosmopolitan cities and more. And increasing air access makes it increasingly easy to get here. New Zealand is a three-hour direct flight from the eastern seaboard of Australia, and a 10 to 12 hour direct flight from most places on the Pacific Rim, including Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo and the West Coast of the USA. We are ready to welcome you, with visa-free entry for 59 countries, plus a dedicated Business Events Visa for delegates from China, India, Thailand and Indonesia.

New activities

There's nowhere else in the world you can learn an authentic Māori haka. Or enjoy a traditional hangi dinner, complete with crayfish cooked in a boiling thermal pool. Where else can you go from your meeting room to sailing on the harbour in an America's Cup yacht in just 20 minutes? Or transfer from the airport to your hotel by jet boat? Where else can delegates bungy jump during the networking canapés? New Zealand offers social event options that will surprise and delight.

New venues

Two cutting-edge, purpose-built convention centres are currently under construction in Auckland and Christchurch, with a wide range of suitable 4 and 5 star accommodation close by.

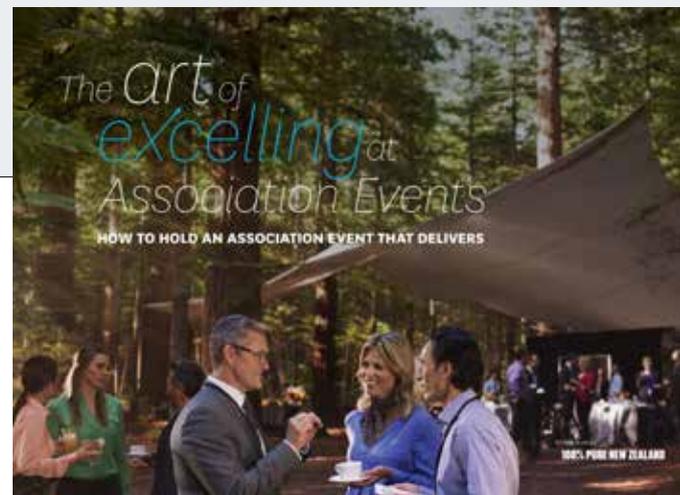
- ▶ In 2019, the New Zealand International Convention centre will open in the heart of Auckland's CBD. Offering 32,500sqm of floor space, it will host one-off events for 4,000, with convention capacity for 3,150, and New Zealand's largest theatre, seating 2,850.
- ▶ The Christchurch Convention Centre, scheduled to open in 2020, will host up to 2,000 people in a prime riverside location in the city centre, with facilities including a banquet hall seating 1,250.

These new additions will add capacity and choice to the vast array of conference venues already on offer, from the unique to the boutique.

New tools to support you

Tourism New Zealand's Business Events team is dedicated to helping you create an association event that delivers. This has led us to create a new eBook, **The Art of Excelling at Association Events**. Packed full of research and advice from industry leaders, the data above is drawn from the chapter on challenges for associations. Understanding your business and providing a fresh perspective is just one more way we can support international association organisers. Other tools include fully funded site inspections and familiarisation tours, and introductions to the regional convention bureaux, experienced PCOs and creative DMCs that can help you build your best-ever event.

Download the free eBook **The Art of Excelling at Association Events** at businesssevents.newzealand.com/conferences/ebook and put you and your association one step ahead in organising events that engage, educate and inspire.



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with your conference enquiry

or to find out more visit our website
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AUCKLAND

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

With everything you'd expect from a modern, international city – a wealth of intellectual capital, fantastic dining experiences, an impressive range of accommodation offerings, world-class facilities and experiences – it's not surprising that Auckland is considered one of the leading business events destinations in the Asia-Pacific.

But, what also makes Auckland truly stand out is the endless array of stunning natural wonders right on its doorstep, the warm kiwi hospitality and the vibrancy from being one of the most diverse cities in the world.

It's all these attributes and more which make Auckland the ideal destination for hosting business events and why it was voted Australasia's leading meetings and conference destination at the 2017 World Travel Awards.

A CITY ON THE MOVE

A significant transformation of Auckland is underway with a strong pipeline of development including the infrastructure which will be needed to support the growth of the business events sector and in the build up to hosting the America's Cup and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 2021.

Between now and 2023 more than \$23 billion of new strategic investment across the region is planned, funded or underway. This includes the world-class New Zealand

International Convention Centre (NZICC). The NZICC has now confirmed 14 major international conferences seeing 27,000 delegates visit Auckland between 2020 and 2022. Capable of hosting conferences of around 3,150 people and one-off events of around 4,000 people, the NZICC will have 33 meeting spaces and a 2,850 seat theatre. One of the hallmarks of the NZICC is its flexibility and adaptability making it a versatile conference, exhibition and entertainment space. The NZICC will be a world-class facility, connected to the heart of Auckland city, with hotels, tourist attractions and Auckland's vibrant dining scene within a short walk.

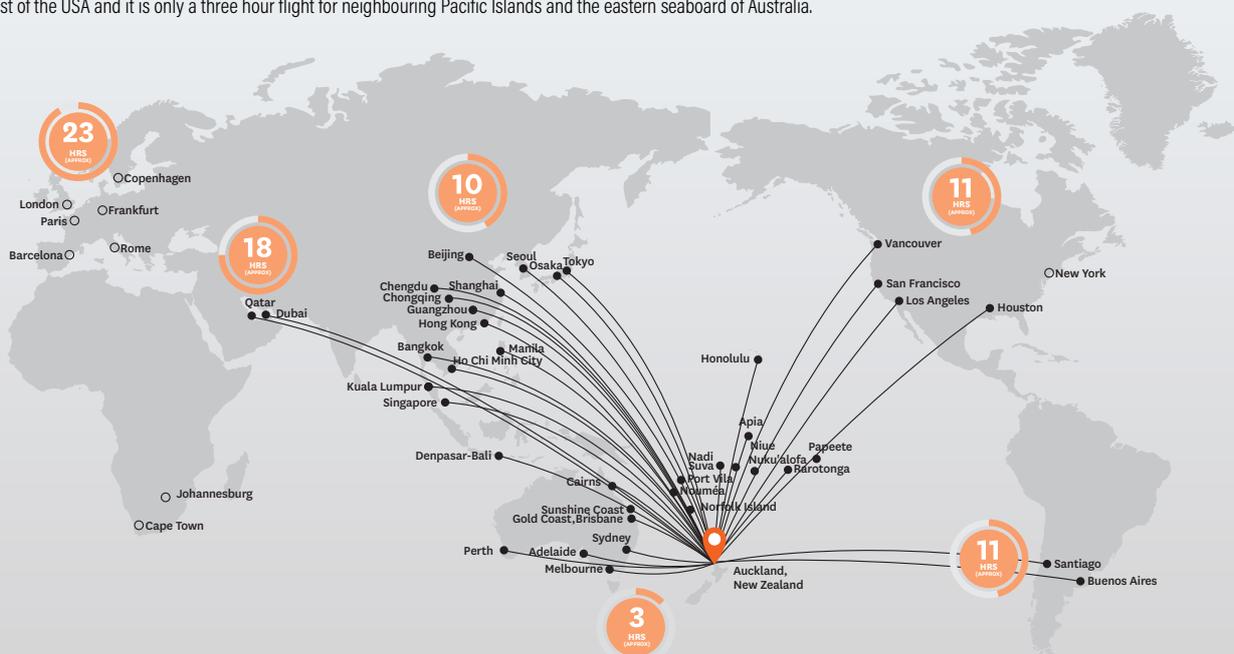
There are also a number of hotel developments underway such as the new SkyCity Hotel, Sofitel SO, Four Points by Sheraton, Park Hyatt, and the recently announced expansion of Cordis, which once completed will have the second most hotels rooms in Australasia.

ACCESSIBLE NEW ZEALAND

International Access

Auckland is the most connected city in New Zealand, with regular flights to and from cities across the globe and daily flights to all the country's main centers and popular tourist destinations.

It is approximately an 11 hour direct flight from most places in the Pacific Rim, including Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo and the West Coast of the USA and it is only a three hour flight for neighbouring Pacific Islands and the eastern seaboard of Australia.





New Zealand International Convention Centre

Set to further support and enhance Auckland's business events offering are a number of other vital transport, commercial and urban projects in progress or due to start, including the expansion of the international airport which includes a second runway due for completion by 2028.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

It's never been faster or easier to get to New Zealand's largest city, with 30 international airlines flying direct from 43 destinations into Auckland International Airport.

Thanks to direct flights by Emirates, Air New Zealand and Qatar journey times to regional cities like Munich or Dusseldorf in Germany, and Manchester or Glasgow in the United Kingdom, have reduced by up to six hours.

Auckland is just a direct overnight flight from the United States west coast, and about 11 hours from major Asian cities including Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo.

SOPHISTICATED CITY

Auckland is a new world city that blends a vibrant urban lifestyle with a beautiful natural playground of harbours, beaches, volcanic cones, native forests and gulf islands.

The central city alone has more than 7,000 hotel rooms ranging in style from 2-star to 5-star standards, with shopping, dining, entertainment and attractions all within easy reach.

Auckland has an extensive range of venues, and can currently host groups of up to 3,000 people in large purpose-built convention centers, as well as having a number of hotels and venues that cater for large-scale conferencing.

In close proximity to accommodation and the conferencing facilities are world-class restaurants, bars and galleries and fantastic shopping, all of which are encircled by wine regions, beautiful beaches, pristine native forests and sparkling harbours.

With everything so close by it's easy to hop from one experience to the next. In 20 minutes of leaving the

meeting room you could be sailing on the harbour or walking along golden beaches!

INNOVATION HUB OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC

In the World Bank's 2017 Doing Business report, New Zealand ranked as the easiest place to do business in the world.

Auckland is the country's economic powerhouse, contributing 38 per cent of the national gross domestic product. The region's population is growing quickly and Auckland's economic growth has been faster than most developed cities since 2010.

Auckland competes strongly on the world stage for export revenue, talent and investment, making it a great place to meet and exchange ideas.

Lately, there has been a shift towards more knowledge-based, intensive, value-added sectors, further spurring on this rapid growth. These advanced industries comprise of commercial and knowledge-intensive services such as engineering and architectural consulting, ICT, and technology innovation, spanning medical devices and food sciences, agricultural machinery and pharmaceutical manufacturing.

Companies can tap into Auckland's highly educated and experienced workforce. Auckland has one of Australasia's largest recruitment bases of highly-skilled employees, and a labour market which is flexible and mobile.

Auckland is also a great place to live. The international Mercer Quality of Living Survey has ranked Auckland the third most liveable city in the world every year since 2012, while the 2016 Economist's Global Liveability Survey ranks us eighth.

CONNECTED CITY

Great business events only come together when the right people come together. Auckland takes a joined up, city-wide approach to hosting business events. Auckland Convention Bureau works closely with Tourism New Zealand and venues such as New Zealand International Convention Centre throughout the bidding process and beyond.

Reflecting on this joint effort, Professor Charles McGhee from the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology Congress 2020 said, "Auckland Convention Bureau has been outstanding. Without them it would have been a chore, but they have enabled us to network with the convention centre and Tourism New Zealand to help us create an excellent bid which was successful and I'm very pleased to work with them for the 2020 conference."

The Conference Assistance Programme offers strategic marketing and bid assistance to internationally-affiliated organisations seeking to host a conference of more than 200 international delegates in New Zealand. Support can include providing a financial feasibility study of the conference, bid presentation costs, international travel assistance, preparing professional documents and presentations to set bids apart and marketing strategies to improve an organisation's chance of winning a bid.

TEAM NEW ZEALAND



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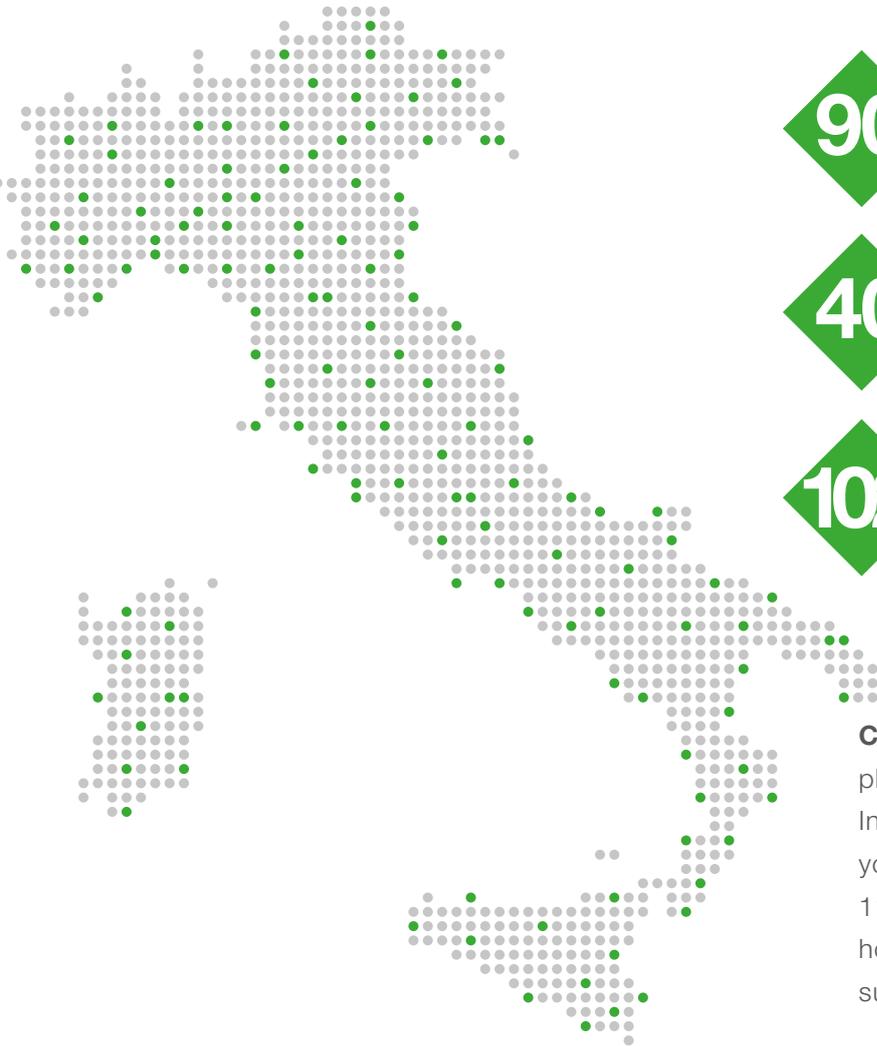
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ITALY - The Hub for knowledge



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THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY
INCLUDING THE WORLD'S
OLDEST UNIVERSITY**

40

FINE ART INSTITUTES

102

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OPERATIONAL SCIENTIFIC
COMMUNITIES**

Convention Bureau Italia puts together the perfect places to spread and share this great knowledge. In the official Convention Bureau Italia's network, you'll find 6 institutional partners, 19 LCB and DMO, 11 congress centers and venues, 5 hotel chains, 32 hotels, 31 top agencies PCO and DMC and 8 top suppliers.



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Next year in Bruxelles!

➤ Don't miss:

Convention Bureau Italia organises "Italy at hand", the first unconventional b2b workshop inspired by the same communication campaign. The first edition will take place in the city of Bologna, with the support of Bologna Convention Bureau, who win the application. The event will take place between Palazzo Pepoli, Palazzo Re Enzo, Palazzo Albergati and other amazing venues. The innovative format will provide with pre-scheduled one-to-one meetings and typical networking activities with +39 Italy, the DMC author of the communication campaign "Italy at hand".



PEACEFULLY PROGRESSIVE REYKJAVIK



Waking up next door to nature would ideally mean a cabin stay nestled in wooded mountains, overlooking a rustic green field, or sleeping under the stars on an untouched beach.

Urban settings constructed and designed without removing or damaging nature, but rather honouring it, has become more rare than not in today's man-made world, particularly in city centres and metropolitan areas. Reykjavik, however, proudly offers a perfect balance between engineering and nature; in fact there aren't many places in the city where nature feels removed or non-present. Neighbourhoods and popular sceneries are either nestled by mountains, the sea or both, and many surrounded by vast lava fields.

Harpa, one of Reykjavik's proud new architectural visions, poses in the city centre with the backdrop of mountains and sea. This is where Icelanders and visitors alike seek out concerts, conferences, and cuisine. With stunning views from within the distinctive windows looking out on the water, white-capped blue mountains and the harbour, Harpa has become one of the most incomparable venues of Northern Europe.

Before, after, or in the interim of any function at Harpa, it's accessible to stroll along the harbour, viewing local fishermen coming to shore with their pristine catches of the day, and watching tour boats taking off with eager nature loving travellers hoping to catch glimpses of whales. The carved-like downtown coastline features a walking path along the Atlantic Ocean connecting nature and city life.

Reykjavik is structured with walking and hiking paths that are surrounded by nature's presence, from lava fields to sea to mountains. Every year Reykjavik welcomes more visitors seeking our unspoiled natural wonders taking in the lunar view within and beyond the capital's outskirts. Travellers also indulge in nature beyond observation, as our ever-evolving food scene continues to form new geographies with naturally sourced ingredients and new creations of old traditions.

Whenever nature is involved in the complete journey from visual and physical space to savour and sips, it's really a different kind of experience. When fresh air and sea surround the somewhat raw land, everything is fresher and more real. It's as if the life cycle of the land chooses the culinary direction and we simply follow it.

Iceland prides itself on its pristine seafood, wild grass-fed lamb, clean drinking water, fresh dairy, wild arctic herbs, and greenhouse grown produce. All of this sets the initial mood in our modern cuisine, run by talented chefs around the city and beyond. Though the culinary scene has been evolving for a while, it's very recent that artisanal cocktails made with all Icelandic ingredients have become prevalent in our dining scene.



Our tranquil little Nordic country once again topped the safety index, being the most peaceful nation on earth. With all of our hot springs, natural pools and landscape wonders it's not that surprising that we are a peaceful nation and being number one is never a problem for us. In fact, we pride ourselves for any per capita wins - including our Coca Cola drinking, which we might need to reconsider.

Icelanders are generally hard working and positive people. Being a small island nation between the United States and Europe, and somewhat influenced by both continents, we have our own unique qualities. One is that we think we can do anything, in spite of our size. Anything is possible if we put the work in. We also don't believe that we should lack anything just because there are so few of us. We're not afraid of large goals with short turn-arounds.

Anything from beating England in the Euro Cup and qualifying for the World Cup, to being number one on the technology index (published by the United Nations International Telecommunication Union), is

solely built on a can-do attitude. We simply believe that we can do anything and there's a lot credibility with that kind of attitude. We don't take ourselves too seriously, there's a thread of humour that comes with this attitude while enjoying surprising ourselves with our accomplishments.

Though the winter darkness can be trying, Icelanders are among the first in global measures of happiness. Families live close to each other and there's a high quality of life in that when children grow up, they have the support of grandparents and other relatives. Somehow that support turns out to boost our independence, confidence and work ethic. The trust level is high in Icelanders, which is another boost in our can-do traits. It's certainly a positive aspect to believe that people will deliver, and they do.

The Global Peace Index ranks nations based on domestic and international conflicts. Iceland is a military free country and the only NATO member without a standing army. Iceland has the lowest crime rate per capita and scores the lowest points

for homicides and terror acts, as well as number of people in jail. Additional positive aspect: Iceland is an island and that means border disputes aren't relevant.

Being a peaceful and safe nation, we let our babies sleep outside during daytime naps. Seeing a bundled up baby sleeping in a pram outside a shop unsupervised isn't an uncommon scene in Reykjavik and throughout the country. This tradition goes way back and continues to awe visitors, but for us this is just a part of our daily lives.

What makes us so peaceful might have something to do with our progressive offerings such as health care, free education, geothermal energy, legalised gay marriage and our latest proud factor of being the first country in the world to end gender pay gaps. Our roughly 330,000 citizens have a lot to be thankful for, which keeps aggressiveness low and happiness high.



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MEET  REYKJAVÍK
Reykjavik Convention Bureau

DOES ICELAND EXIST?

If there is one building that put Iceland, and more specifically its capital Reykjavik on the world's map, it has to be Harpa. Harpa is a fantastic example of how a convention centre can become a focal point in the city. A world-class architectural monument. Harpa is included on Top Architects' (Architecture + Design) list of the 10 Best Designed buildings in the World.

Marcel A. M. Vissers reports

Everyone loves a bit of exoticism, and the Extreme North is no different. As I was on my way to Reykjavik for the European Cities Marketing (ECM) Spring Meeting 2018, they announced a snow storm. I was really worried. But once I landed, I found myself in a lovely snowscape, full of colourful houses and well-lit streets. Yes it was cold, the biting cold wind turned my face red and yet I felt the attraction of the north magnetic pole. My dream was to see the Northern Lights but it was far too cloudy during this period. Instead I got to enjoy the light of winter.

PRAISE FOR HARPA

Leading international architects have expressed their praise for the architectural design of Reykjavik's convention centre. They say it's probably the most magnificent building in the North and more.

Just as captivating is Reykjavik's Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Center, a collaboration between the architecture firms Henning Larsen and Batteríð and artist Olafur Eliasson. Together they conceived an asymmetrical structure clad in a skin of LED-illuminated glass-and-steel "bricks," which every

evening gives Icelanders a show as dazzling as the northern lights. It's the kind of boundary crossing that can make architecture a force for activating cities and reenergizing cultures.

Even before its official opening, this gemlike venue breathed new life into the Icelandic capital's once-sleepy harbour, captivating locals and luring visitors with its kaleidoscopic façade of multicoloured glass. The crystalline shell, conceived by artist Olafur Eliasson, wonderfully complements the structure's aggregate of jagged, geometric volumes. At night, exterior LED strips activate, transforming the waterfront landmark into a shimmering beacon of beauty.

ECM IN REYKJAVIK

ECM chose Reykjavik for its annual Spring Meeting, or in this case, winter meeting. The conference title sounded a bit strange: Hack the City! But there is an explanation for this. With "Hack the City", ECM is not endorsing cybercrime, but rather following in the footsteps of the best of Jedi Knights, looking towards the dark side to leverage and learn from the mindset

that ignites innovation and disruption. Josh Linkner was even clearer: hacking is nothing more than an unorthodox problem solving methodology. During the conference, panels and speakers often referred to a change of mindset and tools to stimulate and facilitate urban development and innovation in the visitor economy. And here we can already see a difference in how they refer to their customers. For tourism, customers are tourists who don't want to work. The meetings industry meanwhile focuses on delegates who travel to work. They both deserve a specific approach, both on the individual and the marketing level. The destination is the same for both these groups, but the experience is different. A delegate can only spend a limited amount of time in the city because he has to work. Social programmes give him the opportunity to experience a bit of the city. Or he can choose to stay on and enjoy some 'Bleisure'. To sum it up, as I explained in my letter to readers. There is a big difference between travellers and business travellers, and a big difference requires a different approach. Hopefully ECM will open the door wide for a specific conference for the meetings industry.



ASSOCIATIONS WORLD CONGRESS 2018 IN ANTWERP

Calling Antwerp 'a diamond of a congress city' may sound like a cliché to the residents of Antwerp; a finely cut gemstone that can be regarded from a myriad of perspectives. This could be experienced first-hand by the delegates of the 2018 Associations World Congress. What impact does a conference like this have on a city? Marcel A. M. Vissers reports

At the Associations World Congress on 12 - 14 March, hundreds of association executives were educated and informed on best practice, benchmarking, governance and many other business-critical topics specifically tailored to international and European associations. I have a question with regard to the title: World Congress. Isn't a name like this a little pretentious?

Of course, Brussels boasts many, many headquarters of international associations - let's keep it at roughly 1,800 (according to UIA, the Union of International Association). And, surrounding Brussels, there are another 900 in Paris, 800 in London, 400 in Amsterdam, 300 in Frankfurt and another 50 very big ones in Geneva. Well, it will take a special occurrence to get the delegates to take a seat in their leather chairs. From experience we know that many of them will not be present. In Brussels, it is difficult to get together more than 20-25 delegates for a destination presentation. Of course, a conference has more to offer than just a presentation. And if Damian Hutt, the Association of Association Executives' Executive Director, is able to get together 250 association executives in Antwerp then I say: hats off!

What I have noticed is that there were many suppliers present from all over the world. This pleads for resourceful commercial insight, and who would not want to have that in our sector?

I have heard few complaints about the programme, or so I heard from the connoisseurs, 'much better than in previous years'. And that is certainly very good. On the downside, these same people said were never able to discover exactly who these 250 associations were. Was there a list of association executives attending the conference? I do know quite a few, but...

For Antwerp, this conference was certainly good. Antwerp has a lot of spotlights. But what was the opinion of the conference's hosts? I will now cede the floor to four leading players.

Koen Kennis, Vice Mayor, City of Antwerp said: *"We are happy that AAE chose Antwerp for its World Congress! Our city has the potential to be the ideal backdrop for conventions and meetings, thanks to its excellent MICE infrastructure, the presence of a top-class international port, a distinguished logistics, maritime and chemicals cluster and a developing healthcare cluster."*

Anja Stas, Chief Commercial Officer of FMCCA and who opened the Congress, says: *"We are so honoured to be hosting this event and giving you the opportunity to experience our ROOM with a ZOO in Antwerp. Flanders Meeting & Convention Center is the only convention centre in the world with a ZOO on site that guarantees an immediate CSR solution through animal conservation."*

The keynote speaker at the Awards was Ben Weyts, Flemish Minister for Mobility, Public Works, the Vlaamse Rand, Tourism and Animal Welfare: *"Flanders offers numerous assets to associations. The Congress was the perfect opportunity to showcase our destination to international association professionals."*

Elke Dens, Marketing Director at VISITFLANDERS also comments: *"We were very proud to host the Associations Word Congress gala dinner. We took the opportunity to transform the audience into genuine Flemish Masters at our themed event."*



THE ASSOCIATION OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES HAS LAUNCHED A NEW EVENT IN ITS ASSOCIATIONS CONGRESS SERIES. THE AFRICA ASSOCIATIONS CONGRESS WILL TAKE PLACE 29 - 31 OCTOBER 2018 AT THE CSIR INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (CSIR ICC) IN PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA.

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EUROPEAN CONVENTION BUREAUS IN DISTRESS

MARCEL A.M. VISSERS
EDITOR IN CHIEF

HeadQuarters magazine

I need to get it off my chest one more time. During the recent European Cities Marketing (ECM) conference in Reykjavik I couldn't help but feeling jealous of the organisational model of the European Tourist Bureaus. It seems to work really well. They have come together and set up a platform where knowledge and skills are being shared, where research is carried out and where new initiatives are introduced.

It is very obvious that members feel very much at home. However, since the European Convention Bureaus were consolidated in ECM (2007), I must admit that I have lost my sense of belonging. To be honest, I almost felt a bit like an orphan during the conference. I didn't really get many opportunities to network and although the subjects being presented were very appropriate for the tourist sector they were not really relevant for the Meetings Industry.

One exception was the presentation by Bettina Reventlow-Mourier (Wonderful Copenhagen CVB) and Iftah Amit of the Kenes Group. It captured my attention. Their focus was on DIY Congresses or the invention of congresses in a town. The Kenes people are specialists in initiating new congresses and together, the two of them told us all the tips and secrets of DIY congresses. These speakers were inspiring and as a result I was once more eager to support the idea of a single European Convention Bureau Platform, uniting all of Europe's bureaus in one solid wing of the ECM, with its own annual convention and a strong name whatever that may be.

The gap between Tourism and the Meetings Industry is too big to try to put them both in the same pot. Of course, there is a lot of overlap but on the whole not really enough to start covering the soul of MICE. Putting Bettina in charge of a Meetings Group within ECM, working with a team of committed members, might be the first step towards creating a new model capable of once more placing our European cities in a leading position on the map of conference hosting and organisation. Those who are most in need of such a platform are the corporates. This is probably the most neglected business group in Europe these days. DMCs and PCOs have not succeeded in promoting cities in a coordinated and professional manner. To some extent this is understandable as it must be difficult for them to remain unbiased. So now it is high time that Meetings Cities once more take matters into their own hands.

The gap between Tourism and the Meetings Industry is too big to try to put them both in the same pot



MORE STORIES ON WWW.MEETINGMEDIAGROUP.COM

1

MEETINGS & EVENTS IN REMARKABLE RWANDA

As the Rwanda MICE industry flourishes, Kigali has gained a new convention venue "Intare Conference Arena". Surrounded by breathtaking views, located par excellence for business meetings and special events of every kind, Intare Conference Arena is the latest addition to the city's landscape with a modern design conference venue, with an auditorium that seats 2,600 people and 9 meeting rooms ideal for side meetings, trainings or board meeting.

Intare Conference Arena is only 15 minutes' drive from the Kigali International Airport and 30 minutes from the Kigali city center. It is an ideal venue for the varying requirements of conventions, exhibitions and events as it was designed to address the well rounded needs of today's meetings and events aspiring to provide the greatest convenience, focus and functionality for attendees.

Meet in Remarkable Rwanda to create a one-of-a-kind experience for your delegates.

WWW.RCB.RW

4

SARAWAK'S BUSINESS EVENTS ADVOCATES COMMUNITY IMPACTS AT BENGOH VALLEY FOR #GMID 2018

Sarawak Convention Bureau (SCB) continues to promote inclusivity of rural communities in its recent Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) excursion at Kampung Sting, Bengoh Valley in conjunction with the Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) 2018.

"Today, Sarawak joins in the global conversation to advocate the real impacts and real results of Business Events. This sector has the capacity to bring about real change to communities, especially to those who need it the most," began Amelia Roziman, Chief Operating Officer of SCB.

Apart from channeling efforts into the construction of a chapel at the resettled Bidayuh village of Kampung Sting, SCB also contributed basic homestay facilities in supporting the village's shift from agriculture into eco-tourism.

(photo: Team SCB joining the global conversation of #GMID 2018 from the clandestine Kling waterfalls of Bengoh Valley)

WWW.BUSINESSEVENTSSARAWAK.COM

2

WASHINGTON, DC BECOMES FIRST U.S. DESTINATION TO PARTNER WITH WECHAT

Washington, DC continues its expansion into China, the city's top overseas market, and has become the first DMO in the United States to officially partner with WeChat (known as "Weixin" in China).

Through the cooperation with WeChat, Destination DC (DDC), the official destination marketing organization for Washington, DC, will continue to grow Welcome China, the organization's certification program for its members looking to cater to Chinese travelers. China has been Washington, DC's top overseas market for several years and DDC continues to play an important role in increasing tourism to the nation's capital. In 2016, one in every 10 Chinese travelers to the U.S. visited Washington, DC, an increase of 75% from 2013, according to Travel Market Insights.

WASHINGTON.ORG

5

SEVILLA PRESENTS THE NEWEST AND MOST MODERN CONFERENCE VENUE IN EUROPE

Today, traditional Andalusian culture goes hand in hand with modern advances. The timeless beauty, magic and charm of Seville has been further enhanced with forward-looking investments made for the enjoyment of visitors and business travellers alike. The newly launched Cartuja Center Cite, located in Isla de la Cartuja, has become one of the most modern venues in Europe for conferences and events. The center has been equipped with the latest high-tech amenities in the market and state-of-the-art facilities to host events up to 3,800 pax. From March 2018 on, the new Auditorium Cartuja Center will reinforce Seville's offering as one of the best destinations for the Meetings Industry in the South of Spain, where delegates will be able to experience the city's vibrant history, culture and monuments.

WWW.SEVILLACB.COM

3

100 YEARS OF THE SWEDISH EXHIBITION & CONGRESS CENTRE

The Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre (SECC) is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. The SECC in Gothenburg became the first exhibition centre in Scandinavia when it was opened by King Gustav V and Queen Viktoria on 8 July 1918. The venue will be celebrating its 100th anniversary with a series of activities this year. Among other events, the SECC hosted a special anniversary weekend in April and award a grant to support the Swedish tourism industry.

Gothia Towers is part of the SECC and with its 1,200 rooms it is one of the ten largest hotels in Europe. There are also 40,000 square metres of exhibition space, congress halls, meeting facilities, a wide choice of restaurants, a spa, art gallery and a dedicated show arena. The meeting venue also includes the five-star Upper House, chosen as the best hotel in Sweden by TripAdvisor in 2017.

EN.SVENSKAMASSAN.SE

6

THE ATOMIUM IS 60 YEARS OLD; IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE - A LOVE STORY SINCE 1958

Host your upcoming event somewhere between Heaven & Earth. Atomium, Brussels's Tour Eiffel has become one of the most visited attractions in Belgium and its event centre offers an unique and flexible venue for meetings, conferences, professional events, gala evenings and all other kinds of events.

To mark its 60th anniversary, the Atomium will be launching various activities, exhibitions, events and products honouring this ever-iconic symbol of Brussels and Belgium.

Throughout this jubilee year, the entrance ticket to the Atomium will give visitors automatic access to the ADAM -Brussels Design Museum, so that everyone can visit the exhibitions on a single ticket and experience this unique chapter in Belgium's history.

WWW.ATOMIUM.BE



© www.abamium.be - SABAM 2016 - Christophe Licoppe / Beifocus

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

Cancer Drug Development Forum (CDDF) has played an active role in improving the efficiency of cancer drug development since 2001. Marjorie Recorbet, association manager of CDDF, tells HQ about how they evaluate their advocacy efforts in the rapidly changing and inherently challenging environment.

What unique value does CDDF contribute to the cancer drug development sector?

Cancer is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide. The incidence of cancer rising - with the World Cancer Report, published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), estimating that the cancer burden will rise to 70% in the next two decades. Against this background, there is an urgent need for rapid licensing and market availability of innovative, more effective oncology drugs.

Established in 2001 and with its office based in Brussels, CDDF is a unique platform that unites experts from academia, the pharmaceutical industry, regulatory authorities (including the European Medicines Agency and US Food and Drug Administration), payers, healthcare providers and patient advocates and encourages a unique collaborative approach, where experts engage in frank and open discussions exploring innovative ideas with the goal of creating an ideal scientific, regulatory and commercial environment for the clinical development of cancer drugs. The focus is on Phase 1 trials, with early dialogue encouraged between regulators and pharmaceutical companies, to achieve valuable input on the design of Phase 2 and 3 trials.

What are some of the biggest breakthroughs in cancer drug development over the past two decades?

Extraordinary progress in oncology drug development have improved survival rate since then: anti-cancer treatments have emerged including the recent wave of immuno-oncology based therapies; more drugs have been approved within oncology than in any other therapy area; and advances in technologies have enabled to process large quantity of health data.

This rise in new oncology therapies is expected to continue over the coming years.

What are the biggest challenges facing cancer drug development today?

New breakthroughs such as personalised medicine and immunotherapy are throwing up complex issues and unprecedented challenges for the oncology community. While developments create new opportunities, they also raise challenges including identifying the patients most likely to benefit from specific therapies or identifying the best model to take forward. In addition, therapies need to have tolerable safety profiles at a cost health systems can afford, and to overcome inequities in access due to the different health system assessment criteria in European countries.

When it comes to advocacy, how do you measure the impact you're achieving?

CDDF has an upwind approach to advocacy. Rather than focusing our efforts on policy lobbying, we work upstream by enabling discussions between key stakeholders including subject matter experts and regulatory authorities on current and future challenges of drug development. The benefit of engaging with decision-makers very early in the process allows them to make the most appropriate decisions that improve the outcome of patients with cancers.



What does the upwind approach entail?

Being so upstream in the drug development process and in the policy making process, impact measurement is clearly a challenging task, especially over the short run. Nevertheless, to help us strive our efforts on the most important topics and in a right way, we use multiple techniques to measure our impact. We run qualitative and quantitative feedback surveys after each major workshop or conference we organise; we monitor repeated attendance by key participants, being it from the academia, the industry or the regulatory authorities and we track our ability to feature publications in oncology journals. Additionally, we regularly evaluate our impact through meetings with our experts in the field. This impact measurement strategy has enabled us to continuously improve our focus over the years.

Of course, over the long run, we measure our impact by the progress of innovations in cancer treatment.

What are the latest trends and tools that you find most helpful to enhance your advocacy efforts?

Our number one value is our ability to connect and engage with key stakeholders. So traditional face-to-face conversations are at the centre of our advocacy efforts. In addition, we use social and online media as a tool to complement our efforts, especially Twitter, which is very helpful to increase engagement and awareness. We are also concentrating efforts on our online communication and marketing to build a base of online supporters. We are currently developing corporate videos to improve our chances of being heard and known by our intended audience.

What are your latest goals?

In terms of our current priorities and in lack of a common EU health care system, we are currently focusing our efforts on overcoming some inequities in access to innovative oncological drugs at national levels. There is a need for a better science-based common position on methodology, greater commitments by politicians, health care decision makers and payers to ensure a widely equal access for patients across the EU to innovative anti-cancer medicines.

What advice would you give to other association leaders?

What I have learned through my association career sums up well in this African proverb:

"If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together."

This is valid within and beyond the association. Within the association, I think that leader should spend sufficient time and energy to recruit, coach and develop the talented individuals that will help reach the association's goals. Beyond the association, I think that collaboration is key to improve outcomes and I would encourage organisations to partner-up to be more efficient in reaching their mission.



CDDF
Cancer Drug Development Forum

MORE INFORMATION

WWW.CDDF.ORG/



THE WAY YOU DRINK MATTERS

In this edition of ESAE Voices, HQ asked Stylianos Filopoulos, director of Wine in Moderation, how a policy commitment to the European Commission helped him and his association to develop a global movement and nurture a culture of responsible drinking.



**STYLIANOS
FILOPOULOS**

Isn't it common sense that we should drink moderately?

Wine has beauty but also risks. Moderation, as with everything in life, is key. For the majority, drinking in moderation and respecting wine and its culture is common sense, but this is not the case for everyone. There is indeed a minority that drink alcoholic beverages in ways that can harm themselves and those around them.

Why the focus on wine?

We are lucky and proud to work with wine, a product of the land that is all about balance. As such, we can indeed build on its long-standing heritage and through

scientific evidence, self-regulation and education to connect, motivate and empower wine professionals, to work towards a sustainable wine culture that will always inspire healthy lifestyles and well-being.

Tell us about how European Commission's policy commitment of the EU wine sector has helped you promote responsible drinking.

"Wine in Moderation" was launched in 2008 as a tangible commitment of the EU sector in European Commission's Alcohol and Health Forum to help reduce alcohol-related harms. The introduction of the EU Alcohol and Health Policy was a challenge but also an amazing opportunity to bring together the European wine sector and show how the wine culture of moderation can help change harmful drinking patterns.

From the very beginning, it was clear that for the programme to be successful, it should refrain from the institutional framework and be endorsed by the international wine community. Something that speak to both wine professionals and consumers at the same time. As such, the international not-for-profit WIM Association was created in 2011 to support "Wine in Moderation" in terms of international coordination, accountability and growth. Together with the help of national coordinators that properly adapts the pro-

gramme to the national needs, the message of drinking in moderation is able to reach millions of professionals and consumers every year.

Since Wine in Moderation was launched in 2008, how successful do you think you have promoted your causes?

From the very beginning, the Wine in Moderation programme has aimed to make a measurable contribution to how people approach wine, and reducing the abuse of alcohol drinks. The progress made has not only been recognised and referenced as good practice by national, European and international authorities, but most importantly, it has served as a model of sustainability and social responsibility in the wine business worldwide.

Reaching our 10th anniversary, we are extremely happy to see that what started as the vision of few leading personalities, is now a well-respected and credible programme synonymous with social responsibility and sustainability.

Sustainability is about change and creating value for society and being able to capture the value created. We will continue to listen to the needs of our stakeholders and pursue our efforts to support the sustainable development of both our business and the society.

How do you manage risks?

We always try our best to understand the rather big and dynamic ecosystem of our association and minimise risks. Every new member, every new country that joins the programme is a challenge and a risk. We can only mitigate risks if we can be true to our values and keep our integrity.

What is your favourite wine?

My favourite wine depends on the moment. There are moments that you seek the company of something light and easy and at other times, you look for elegance and complexity. Some wines can reveal new characteristics when paired with specific foods or depending on their maturity.

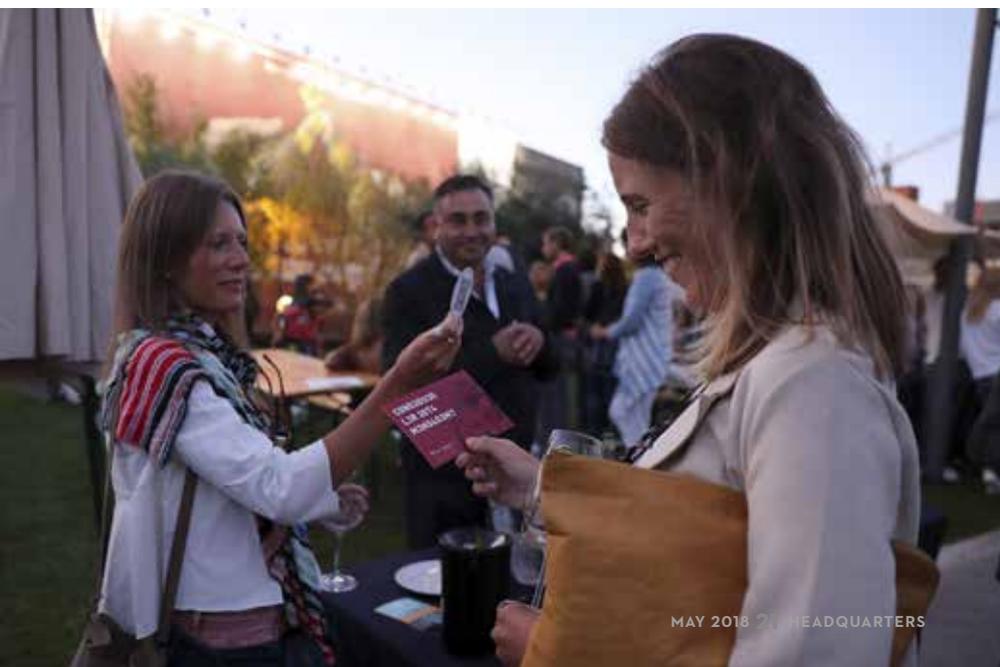
How should wine be enjoyed?

To fully appreciate wine you should drink slowly, with good food and good company, and avoid drinking in excess of course. There are also situations that drinking should be avoided (pregnancy, driving, etc). Always consult your doctor about your drinking habits.



Any advice for other association leaders like yourself?

We are lucky enough to work in international associations and be exposed to different cultures and challenges, and drive change. It's a unique experience but sometimes it can also be frustrating too. If you think that you are alone in this, don't. As most associations have similar challenges, I find meeting and sharing ideas and knowledge with other association executives extremely helpful.



Join Stylianos at European Society of Association Executives (associationexecutives.eu) for networking opportunities, knowledge sharing and more.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
STYLIANOS' ASSOCIATION AT**

WWW.WINEINMODERATION.EU

WINEinMODERATION.com
Art de Vivre
WINE, A CULTURE OF MODERATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AS **STAKEHOLDERS IN CO-CREATION, COMMUNICATION AND USE OF RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE**

International associations as non-profit organisations (NPO) and research and development (R&D) organisations share a baseline mission of promoting societal value and enhancing human wellbeing. Traditionally they operated in own comfort zones with so-called altruistic and/or charitable organisations, on the one hand, and academia, on the other hand. Both sectors have been tipping into significant public and private financial resources.



**DR
DRAGANA
AVRAMOV**

The changing global landscape under which NPO and academia are operating today is bringing about increased awareness of the added value of blending knowledge, skills and competences from the research domain with non-academic and non-formalized knowledge that comes from relevant societal actors including NPO. Another change is the increasing acknowledgement of the necessity for interdisciplinary and international approaches both in research and in activism. Transnational research is needed to address the supra-national challenges.

Transnational cooperation and transnational actions are needed to alleviate intended and unintended consequences of human abuse and mishaps, and man-made and natural disasters that know no borders.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH

Quest for evidence of social impact and return of investment into knowledge-based society favour participatory methodologies. This is pursuit of co-production of new knowledge based on experience, learning from others, and drawing on the knowledge of the participants for capturing the key insights. Experience that the participants bring is valorised through sharing of insights and dialogue.

The expected impact from co-production of knowledge is to contribute to closing the gap between science, policy makers and society. It is assumed that coproduction of knowledge will contribute to more widespread uptake of knowledge and effective solutions to problems.

In this new landscape International Associations as gatekeepers of knowledge about practices worldwide become invaluable partners in contributing to

generating relevant evidence that can go beyond suggesting actions that can be copied. International Associations have the knowledge to address the challenge of identifying needs for possible and desirable adaptations and are powerful multipliers of knowledge.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN DISSEMINATION, EXPLOITATION AND COMMUNICATION

Quest for stakeholder involvement in research goes hand in hand with tailoring communication tools to target stakeholders and also their involvement in discussions about research outputs and the uptake.

A challenge, which research community and International Association share, relates to communication strategies, plans and actions. The key questions may be summarised as follows. How do you tell others about your achievements? How do you harvest reactions to your achievement from the "relevant others"? How do you create added value of engaging stakeholders in a meaningful conversation?

International Associations as powerful multipliers of knowledge can pick up some hints from expectations of funding agencies towards the research



community. Understanding the new context of requirements for research funding can help International Associations to forge their place and access funding as knowledge users and knowledge providers. The, "Dissemination & exploitation" section of the H2020 Online Manual details :

- ▶ Dissemination is the public disclosure of the results in any medium. It is a process of promotion and awareness raising right from the beginning of a project. It makes research results known to various stakeholder groups (like research peers, industry and other commercial actors, professional organisations, policymakers) in a targeted way, to enable them to use the results in their own work.
- ▶ Exploitation is the use of the results during and after the project's implementation. It can be for commercial purposes but also for improving policies, and for tackling economic and societal problems.
- ▶ Communication means taking strategic and targeted measures for promoting the action itself and its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.

The approach to communication as a driver of positive change, focus on communicating with rather than communicating to, and tailoring of content for different stakeholders, wide opens the door to International Associations to partake in research projects and access research funds.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Examples of funding opportunities in partnership with research organisations are numerous. Some key EU actions are:

HORIZON 2020 research framework programme covers funding of research during the 2014-2020 period. Within the research vision of reaching out to the global world there is greater space for non-formal and informal knowledge providers such as International Associations.

Of particular relevance are specific instrument/ actions such as HORIZON 2020 Coordination and Support Action (CA and SA) under various societal challenges, and HORIZON 2020 Science with and for Society (Swafs) .

Relevant are also dedicated actions. Some were launched through the work programme in 2010 that included a topic for Latin America and Caribbean (LAC), and Specific International Cooperation action (SICA) for China. Both build on strong SSH input as they relate to social and economic uses of environment in LAC countries and urbanisation trends and processes in China.

Not to be overlooked is Networking and knowledge sharing by means of European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST). COST is the longest running European intergovernmental network for cooperation in research and technology.

DR DRAGANA AVRAMOV

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A DEEP DIVE IN THE EUROPEAN BUBBLE WHAT'S IN FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION?

(Forget about Belgian Beer: Why Brussels is a top hub for associations)

Main changes in 2018 and opportunities for international associations

Home to more than 2,250 International and European associations, Brussels confirms year after year its position as a global association hub. A trend that Brexit has reinforced, with many industry bodies and professional societies seeking to relocate to Belgium. Beyond waffles, chocolate and moules-frites, what drives associations towards the Belgian capital?

The answer lies in the location of the European Union's (EU) core institutions and the need to keep close ties with EU policy-makers who set the rules governing access to a single market of more than 500 million consumers.

The European Single Market is the EU's most significant success and much has been achieved since its inception back in 1957. In 1988, former President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors predicted that "in ten years, 80 per cent of the legislation related to economics will be of Community origin". Even if this figure seems overestimated today, EU legislation does regulate many sectors: healthcare, energy and environment, transport, financials, digital or manufacturing, just to name a few. It also offers a broad range of projects and programmes which represent a significant source of potential funding for associations. Thus, for any trade, industry or professional association, advocating for its sectorial interests and contributing to shape the EU agenda is of critical importance.

The EU's decision-making process is quite complex and involves multiple institutions; the European Commission (which holds the power of initiative), the European Parliament (whose members are directly elected every 5 years) and the Council of the EU (representing the Member States). In the EU regulatory debates however, civil society and industry perspectives are not only welcome but are built into the decision-making process, with multiple rounds of public consultations, expert groups meetings, etc. to legitimize the ultimate decision.

The pre-requisite to such policy engagement in Brussels is transparency: associations, like any party seeking to advocate for a cause, have to fill in the EU Transparency Register and abide by its rules (11,695 registrants to date). Another must is trust: an association's credibility vis-à-vis EU institutions and stakeholders is its most valuable asset. Not even the best lobbyist in town can have a tarnished reputation. Although the regulators have the final say, associations can make themselves heard by building upon their expertise and their capacity to empower a given sector to speak with one voice. If you are unable to do so, EU officials will not shy away from sending you back to the drawing board. A few years back, as the different players within the same utility segment could not agree on a common position and were pressing for their case individually, European Commission staff instructed them not come back until they were able to bring a unified proposal to the negotiation table.

While associations may often clash with one another over diverging interests, the EU institutions' culture – bringing together such a diverse continent – is all about reaching consensus. Experience has taught many in Brussels that a gentleman's agreement, even when business stakes are high and positions are diametrically opposed, is usually better than regulators picking winners and losers.



Thomas Linget

This is particularly true as global trends like digitisation, decarbonisation or the sharing economy lead industries to converge and seek partnerships beyond their traditional realm. Those new cross-industry alliances and coalitions bringing together stakeholders to leverage the upcoming European business and legislative framework are on the rise. In this context, associations' capacity to engage with their broader ecosystem is key: the success of an automotive standards development organisation can be measured against its ability to join the conversation on automated driving. In the meantime, the EU makes no secret of its intention to maintain its leadership as a global trendsetter in regulation and standardisation in these new fields, as demonstrated on data privacy with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In view of Brexit and an ever-rising populism in Europe, 2018 will be a year of transition for the EU, before next year's European Parliament elections, the subsequent choice of a new president of the European Commission and the nomination of his fellow Commissioners. Although the overall political equilibrium is likely to be preserved, this in-between period is source of both uncertainty and opportunity for associations seeking to profile themselves in the EU bubble. The political agenda for the next five years is in the making, and many are already working around the clock to have their say.

This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author THOMAS LINGET, Senior Account Manager, LOGOS Public Affairs, MCI Group. LOGOS is a Public Affairs, Association Management and Stakeholder dialogue company founded in 1998 and is a founding member of a EPACA. Since 2012, LOGOS is part of the MCI Group family, a globally integrated association, communication and event management company with 62 offices globally. IAPCO represents today 116 companies comprised of over 7500 professional congress organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries.

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FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL THE ASIAN ASSOCIATION MARKET

Today we hear about Asian powerhouses emerging everywhere. Businesses are being bought and consolidation and rebranding takes place. Even Asian brands emerge more often, HuaWai and Mi are now household brands, MG cars re-emerged being a Chinese owned brand, back from the past. It would seem that Asia is slowly taking its fair share on the global market. But in comparison to this, we see very few societies emerge.



MARCEL
EWALS

There is no doubt that Asian membership and or attendance to western conventions has increased dramatically. Many societies can easily say they have 20-30% Asian attendance at their meeting. The question remains, why is this so? One does not have to look far to find some of the basic reasons why this mostly happy phenomena occurs. For anyone who has attended or spoken at the Asian conferences you will realize the local approach of each meeting. And it is this local approach that is exactly what has held back the globalization. First of all, most Asian societies are not membership focused. They consider membership a privilege and the results are that you

get to be a member and participate in the Annual Meeting. As a Federation you represent your country. And a board does not focus on long-term strategy (except for approving the next meeting hosts) but is there primarily to defend its own territory or country (territory is politically more correct as we have HK and Taiwan as independent members). If you look at the basic constitution of a society in Asia (if they are even registered anywhere formally at all) you will see that the main source of income, the Annual (or Bi-annual) Meeting, is franchised out to the local host for either a % of the profit or % of the revenue. Sadly, often there is no profit reported and therefore Societies remain too poor to have a professionally managed member service and real member values provided. Politically, no board challenges the hosts who "lost money". They generally frown and move on. The second part is presentation value. Asians, as much as everyone else, wants to ensure their papers are presented between the best and at the highest level. This drives many KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) to ensure their findings are only published in the western meetings.

But is it all gloom and doom? Not really, as markets balance themselves due to supply and demand. The Middle East has seen commercial organizers taking

the lead and being the successful replacement of societies, and they in turn teamed up with global hospital brands and universities to fill the gap of domain knowledge. In SE Asia, a European cancer society created an Asian edition, which took the entire space in just 12 months.

What is interesting is that they transferred their capacity problem into an opportunity. They were outgrowing their meeting in Europe due to massive delegate growth (especially Asians) and decided to invest in an Asian event to offset that pressure, and created a brand-new opportunity in partnership with a global PCO to take care of local logistics and fundraising. Within its first year it had outperformed the Asian counterpart and taken the lead position in its field. One US based industry association had a more extensive challenge as Asians outnumbered Americans 5-1 in their US meeting, with the result of them announcing a second meeting in 2019 in Asia.

But there are some success stories in the making as well. This is mainly with organizations that have consolidated power, therefore foregoing the politics of Asian correctness. These are the few societies that would work with Core PCOs and have a long-term

strategy and a member focus. Revenues are exclusively for the society and therefore it has room to develop. PCOs often take a stake in the event therefore removing the fear of the society of possible losses, and increasing efficiency in spending and seeing revenue growth and consistency in management, something widely appreciated by sponsors.

Recently I was asked to consult with a local Singapore-based (non-medical) association. This organization has become a flagship of the Singapore government due to its ability to move things and find its own funding and niche. This is an association that will have the capability to influence urban development globally because I believe they are getting it right. They sit on a great knowledge base and are ready to invite the world to share in it. They identified e-learning and community building as their tools, to

provide an offering of a free-membership module with a pay-as-you-go structure. But moreover, they have cloud. They have a partnership with a major development organization to educate policy makers, allowing them an in-road into all Asian corners and likely beyond. With e-learning finally becoming somewhat accepted in Asia, they are just the kind of organization we like to see develop into its exclusive domain area of knowledge.

It is therefore more likely we will see some Asian industry associations take a global stage, rather than scientific. But unless the rather competitive Asian culture disappears among the board of directors allowing a regional focus rather than the protection of the national one within a regional framework, it is unlikely we will see many unified long-term strategies emerging that will provide the globalization.

This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author MARCEL EWALS, Director of Strategic Development and Associations in Asia for MCI Pacific, with 25 years of developing associations in Asia in many different fields. MCI is an independent, privately held company, with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland with 64 offices in over 32 countries across Europe, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, India, the Middle East and Africa delivering projects for clients all over the world. IAPCO represents today 116 companies comprised of over 7,500 professional congress organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries.

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BUILDING BRIDGES IN A SHORT-SIGHTED AND POLITICALLY UNSTABLE WORLD AN INTERVIEW WITH IAPCO PRESIDENT MATHIAS POSCH

A chat with Mathias Posch, the newly elected president of the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO) and president of International Conference Services Ltd, reveals his ambitions and hopes for the industry, and his faith in the young generation. By Vikas Tembhare



MATHIAS POSCH

Mathias shared his views on the areas that are close to his heart and he would like to work to create better and positive impact in the society.

Why should we focus on the social and scientific impacts of association meetings?

Associations' goals are largely around a betterment of the status quo – be it scientific breakthroughs, human rights improvements, a cure or at least better treatment of medical conditions. As a meetings industry, we however usually judge association meetings by their economic impact and therefore miss an important potential that association meetings can have. If we shift our focus to the social and scientific impacts of association meetings to go alongside with the association's goals, we are opening up a whole host of potential and a greater impact such meetings can have on a destination and the local professional community.

What role does the association meeting industry play in the current socio-political climate?

While we see nationalistic tendencies around the globe, association meetings strive through international collaboration and exchange. It is therefore immensely important to highlight advances that are made through international collaboration and to continue increasing the involvement of an international audience. While short-term thinking and political games raise walls, our industry is building bridges for the long term and there is great power in this.

How does the meeting industry contribute to the betterment of society as a whole?

A society that is educated, where scientific and societal advances are being sought and achieved, is a society that thrives. Positive mindset and a "can do attitude" create not just a more forward-looking community but also a wealthier one. I strongly believe, that the international exchange created through association meetings, creates more opportunities in many areas and therefore helps with advancing communities. Receiving international education and learning about best practices from around the globe, helps professionals to apply these new skills in their own communities and therefore have an immediate impact on society – be it medical, scientific or social.

What does young talent bring to the emerging markets?

A truly international meetings industry looks way beyond just inviting delegates from around the globe to meetings and really starts "sharing the wealth". We see many associations eager to enter new markets and bringing their meetings to countries that were long ignored. In order for these markets to really benefit and recognise the full potential of these meetings, it is important to have a strong, educated and experienced meetings industry. Developing young talent is an important step towards making this a sustainable sector in many countries and it motivates me immensely to be able to play a part in this.

"I am incredibly honoured by the trust that IAPCO members put in me and energised by all the positive feedback I have received from all around the industry. This spirit is what we need to make the next couple of years count and I hope people continue to be supportive but also honest and open with me, so we can move the industry forward together."





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Recruiting for Associations

Agency or not, that is the question.

When facing a new recruitment process in your association, you may ask yourself whether to handle the process internally or outsource it. Working with an external agency always carries risks, but it also brings numerous opportunities. While the answer will depend on a number of factors unique for your organisation, there are a few things that can ensure a smooth collaboration should you decide to seek external support.

The do's and don'ts.

First of all, know what you're looking for. Last thing that will bring you high quality candidates is undecidedness and changing your mind about the ideal profile half-way through the process. Recruiters will always keep an eye out for "potentials". However, having a clear understanding of what you're looking for is key to properly targeting the search.

Secondly, be committed to the process. You will be meeting candidates that may not be actively looking for a job. Not providing any feedback after the interview or dragging the process for months, you will only risk losing the good candidates. Remember that as much as you choose them, they choose you.

Finally, be honest about your situation. Recruiters should know about any possible internal issues the new hire will have to face, as much as they should know your unique selling points to attract candidates. This will allow for a comprehensive evaluation of candidates, save time and ensure the process is professional.

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.



Membership Engagement

Three Paths to Better Conversations at Work

CHASING STAKEHOLDERS?

Bringing stakeholders together can feel like herding cats. As soon as you get a couple to be with you, the others run away. Chase them, and you lose the ones you had. This high maintenance manner of trying to serve stakeholders seldom works. Rather than running after them, try attracting them with a little cream.

What is the cream of your association? I.e. what floats to the top? Your organisation must have some value proposition. Separate out that pure quality, and make it be known. Your future members and stakeholders will find you. Animal lovers find the WWF. Alumni return to their alma maters.

Recently, I was rewriting the Value Proposition of the International Association of Facilitators. The statement was based on the actual value current members get from the organisation — not aspirations, but results. This turned out to be better than the promise of a vision statement, as it showed what members get as soon as they join.

PEOPLE ARE ATTRACTED TO WHAT THEY VALUE

When people are sniffing around the idea of getting involved, they want to see how they will get the purported value. They want to see the how the value they seek is reflected in the organisation, the way it works and the people who lead it.

This our whole-system perspective on value, is what Cindy McCauley, of the Center for Creative Leadership, calls making leadership happen. She writes that leadership happens in the interactions and exchanges among people with shared work. Leadership can be happening within teams, work groups, task forces, divisions, communities, and whole organisations.

DIRECTION, ALIGNMENT AND COMMITMENT

Regardless of the group, for leadership to happen, the interactions and exchanges among people have to create:

DIRECTION: Agreement on what the collective is trying to achieve together.

ALIGNMENT: Coordination and shared way of working towards the direction.

COMMITMENT: People are making a collective success a personal priority.

These 3 outcomes — direction, alignment, and commitment (or DAC for short) — make it possible for individuals to work together willingly and effectively to realize the promised value. When members experience DAC around the thing they value, you can be sure they will stay involved. As leaders, we need to weave these values into the direction while aligning resources and building commitment. DAC helps you have engaged stakeholders rather than stray cat you have to chase.



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.



Advocacy is more than lobbying, but both provide opportunities for associations in ways you never considered

It seems more and more that the terms advocacy and lobbying are being used interchangeably throughout the association community worldwide. The only problem with this is that advocacy and lobbying are not necessarily the same things.

Advocacy, by definition, means you have a cause, an issue, or something you believe in that you want to promote to your various publics. Advocacy is being for something, such as giving your organisation a higher profile, and a louder voice, in your industry or profession

You (and your organisation) can be involved in advocacy on a widespread and ongoing basis. In most cases there is no limit to how much time and effort your organisation can spend on advocacy efforts.

Lobbying, on the other hand, refers almost exclusively to trying to influence lawmakers and other decision-makers to support your position on legislation and policy. As opposed to advocacy, which is always about being for something, many organisations frequently lobby against something. Lobbying efforts, while ongoing, are usually centered around deadlines, such as when an election is coming up or a when piece of legislation is scheduled for discussion before the legislature or other government entity. Of course, many organisations do both lobbying and advocacy. Regardless of the titles that are put on these activities, there are a lot of reasons why having effective and active lobbying and/or advocacy programs in place can be important to an organisation's success. It goes beyond the win/lose scoreboard that we often associate with lobbying (i.e. did legislators vote for us or against us). It also goes beyond trying to evaluate whether or not your advocacy efforts have been effective (Do we have better name recognition? Are we seeing policies changed as a result of some of the things we've advocated for?)



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.

You see, advocacy and lobbying are too often measured by these outcomes, things the organisation uses to accomplish its goals. What we forget is that advocacy and lobbying, as activities unto themselves, can also give us a number of ways for associations and other membership-based organisations to provide opportunities for members to be engaged, and ways for us to identify future leaders for the organisation.

Here are some of the reasons why having advocacy and lobbying efforts are so important to organisational health:

- ▶ they can engage members without requiring their physical participation, and engaged members always renew at higher rates
- ▶ they provide OPTIONS on how members can get engaged (writing letters/ emails, talking to people in their communities, etc.) in ways that don't take the time that serving on a committee or Board entails
- ▶ both lobbying and advocacy have bottom-line impact on members' businesses, careers, or communities, so they become some of the tangible value of membership
- ▶ they lend themselves to getting members to talk/communicate with each other, as well as with the organisation
- ▶ they allow for some non-threatening engagement (members get to give their opinions, so there is no right or wrong response)
- ▶ members are more likely to "track" organisational activity in this area than in any other area (they want to know if their input has been heard and if the organisation is making a difference through these efforts)

You don't have to do traditional lobbying to be an effective advocate for your members, their industry, their profession, and their communities. But you can make lobbying and advocacy efforts a part of your plan to let members know that there's a place for them in your organisation, and there's a value to participating and becoming engaged in what the organisation is doing.

Lobbying and advocacy aren't always about winning and losing. Sometimes they are about giving members a voice.

*When that happens,
everyone's a winner.*



He can be reached at mark@baileadership.com
or via his website at www.baileadership.com



MAKE TOURISM MATTER!

The next European Cities Marketing International Conference, will take place in Malmö, Sweden, on June 13-16, 2018. European DMOs will meet and focus on how to “Make Tourism Matter”.

Global travel and tourism has more than 10-doubled over the last 50 years from 100 million international arrivals in 1968 to more than a billion in 2018, and it is projected to almost double again over the next 15 years.

All this time, destinations have fought for their share of the action. Destinations have been pursuing and celebrating growth in bed nights as the golden measure of success – as an indicator of the city’s progress and prosperity. The more, the merrier, let it boom as long as they consume!

But as the impact of climate change and over-tourism is becoming more evident, so is the doubt and hesitation in our industry and communities. As the Western societies navigate times of migration crisis, digital polarization, cultural divides and rising social inequality, pursuit of more tourism as a policy for public good, seem to slip rank on the urban agenda. City marketing as we know it, might seem, well... rather last year.

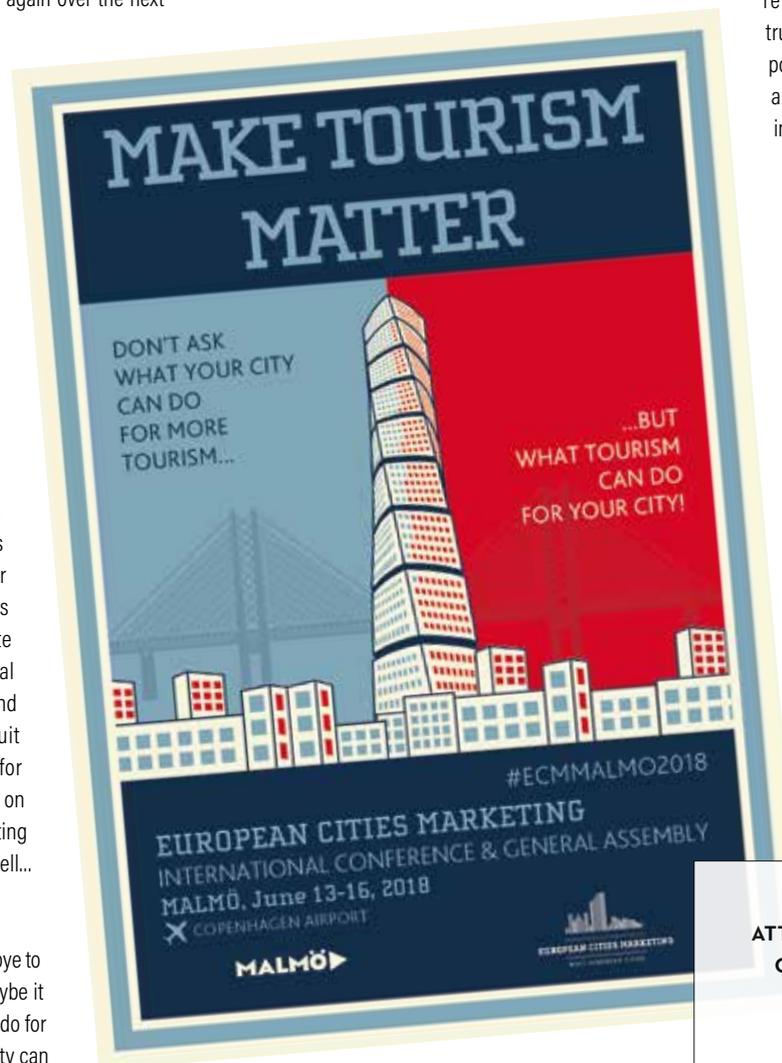
So, maybe it is time to say goodbye to the good old bed night KPI? Maybe it is time to ask what tourism can do for the city, and not just what the city can do for more tourism? Maybe it is time to ask the big and brave question: WHY we do, what we do as DMOs?

In fact, we invite you to discuss, how we can make tourism matter again, and how tourism can give back to the city. Let’s debate how tourism

might help cities tackle the challenges of integration of immigrants, how tourism can help re-generate neighbourhoods or re-vitalize our struggling retail communities. Let’s elaborate the true legacy of scientific conferences and popular events. Let’s talk about tourism as a means to a greater goal, and not a goal in itself.

Better together is a pledge of any strong community. European City Marketing is all about sharing, inspiring and connecting, and this is your invitation to be part of it all. Lucky you!

We look forward to see you in Malmö, the capital of the Swedish region of Skåne and Copenhagen’s cool cousin just across the magnificent bridge connecting Northern and Southern Scandinavia. Malmö is a city with attitude, diversity and strong Scandinavian values. Where else to start a new conversation about our common future?



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ONGOING EDUCATION IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY IS **SUCCESS FACTOR FOR FUTURE BUSINESS**

We live in an always evolving world, and the Meetings Industry is no exception. Ongoing education in the Meetings Industry is success factor for future business, whether you belong to an important or second tiered destination. It's a crucial task for top management in each organisation, whether it is a Convention Bureau (CVB), tourist board, congress centre, airline, hotel, DMC, PCO or meeting planner, to train every employee continuously.

Since 1987, the ECM Summer School sets out the background and context of the Meetings Industry (key players, exhibitions, press, social media, sustainability, clients, intermediaries, RFP and decision-making processes) with a focus on European and international best practices. The set-up of the event allows maximum interaction between students and the experienced meetings professionals that compose the ECM Summer School faculty. The format of the ECM Summer School also guarantees students to meet with as many counterparts as possible whether for challenging speakers in plenary sessions, group work, networking or socialising.

"It was an unforgettable experience with very interesting topics about the Meetings Industry! Everything was well organised and structured. The ECM Summer School is one of the best opportunities

to meet people with the same aims, challenges and difficulties in the Meetings Industry." said Nadine Roth, Assistant Manager Convention at visitBerlin Berlin Convention Office and student during the 31st ECM Summer School in Dresden.

The 32nd edition will for the first time take place in Thessaloniki, Greece on August 25-29, 2018. The faculty are all members/partners of ECM and give their time on a voluntary basis – a way of giving back to the meetings industry: Lone Alletorp Callard (Wonderful Copenhagen), Elif Balci Fisunoglu (ICCA), Nalan Emre (IMEX Group), Sam Johnston (Dublin Convention Bureau), Cain Leatham (GB Fitness), Heike Mahmoud (Congress Center Hamburg), Nicola McGrane (IAPCO), Christian Mutschlechner (Vienna Convention Bureau), Miguel Neves (Social Media Chefs), Colleen Phalen (Destinations International), Mathias Sondermann

(SAP), Anja Stas (FMCCA), Daniel Waigl (CIRSE) and Kerstin Wünsch (tagungswirtschaft) led by the course leader Pier Paolo Mariotti, CMP CMM (EURAC Research).

The ECM Summer School qualifies for CMP certification and every student getting a ECM Summer School diploma also gets 1775 Clock Hours for their overall CMP certification.

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GDPR CONUNDRUMS: THE MYTHS AND REALITIES EXPLAINED

As the May 25 deadline for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance is drawing closer, Nicolas Hamblenne, associate of KOAN Law Firm in Brussels, sheds light on the more complex guidelines and debunks some of the myths surrounding the legislation

What does 'legitimate interests' mean and how might it apply to associations?

The legitimate interest is one of the six grounds foreseen by the GDPR to lawfully process personal data (e.g. in the context of direct marketing). Associations using the legitimate interest will need to show a balance of interests between their own and those of the individual(s) concerned. To sum up, there should be a reasonable expectation from the data subject that his/her data will be processed (e.g. to prevent fraud, to check a child's age, to retain an email address in a "opt-out" list if (s)he unsubscribed from a newsletter). Where there is a serious mismatch between competing interests, the individual's legitimate interests will come first and the association may not rely on this legal basis.

What is the right to data portability? What sort of data falls into this category? What challenges do associations face when putting it into practice?

Data portability is a new right – applicable as from 25/05/2018 – allowing any data subject to require the transfer of his/her data (s)he has provided to another association. This transfer must be performed via a structured, commonly used, machine-readable and interoperable format. The main challenges are (i) to gather that data and (ii) that associations from similar sectors agree on such formats to ease that kind of transfers. This right does not apply where processing is based on a legal ground other than consent or a contract.



Nicolas Hamblenne

How should associations handle the tricky matter of employee data processing? Must consent be granted in the context of employer-employee relationship?

Consent will be stricter than under the current legislation. Moreover, the consent must be free, specific, informed and unambiguous (or explicit in case of sensitive data). A key challenge in the HR context is that consent will rarely be valid between an employer and an employee due to the different level of negotiation powers. Moreover, consent can be withdrawn at any time without any justification, hence the fragility of such legal basis. Instead, it is highly recommended to use other legal bases to justify such processes of personal data in a HR context, such as the execution of the contract (e.g. payments, establishing the contract), legal obligations (e.g. data transmitted to social security services) or legitimate interest (see above).

Are there different retention periods for different types of data processed? What are the issues or factors that associations have to consider?

Indeed, according to the principle of proportionality, an association processing data must only keep it for as long as necessary for the purpose of such processing. Supervisory authorities have already set different kind of retention periods. Moreover, legal obligations and limitation periods (e.g. strict deadlines to invoke responsibility before a court, tax controls) are lawful justifications to keep the data.

The GDPR is more flexible regarding the retention period when data are kept for scientific, historical research or statistical purposes. Therefore, associations should make sure to agree on the most appropriate retention period and delete or anonymise outdated data in their possession.

What are some of the biggest myths about GDPR in your opinion?

1st myth: "GDPR compliance will end as from 25/05/2018". Compliance is a two-step process: firstly, an association should build compliance simultaneously from a technical, legal and organisational point of view. Secondly, an association should run compliance – which is an ongoing process and should be reassessed regularly.

2nd myth: "GDPR is a revolution". Indeed, the GDPR has received a lot of attention recently. However, in comparison with the Data Protection Directive of 1995 (23 years ago!), the main concepts, principles, obligations and rights remain identical. There is indeed an evolution of the regime due to the development of digitalisation and big data, including new/extended obligations for entities processing data and rights for data subjects. However, it is true that supervisory authorities will now be equipped with much more powers to control and sanction non-compliant companies and associations.



GDPR

GETTING READY FOR THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

Questions answered by David Chalmers, Senior Marketing Director, Cvent Europe for Headquarters Magazine

How has Cvent prepared for GDPR?

Over the last 12 months our technical, security, marketing and legal teams have worked to deliver an internal cross functional programme to prepare for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) prior to the 25th May deadline. We have rigorously looked at all the systems and solutions across our platform and assessed the necessary changes to implement in order to enable customers to comply with the new regulation. To demystify GDPR legislation for our clients we have produced resources to describe the updates to our processes and systems and the benefits these bring to every stage of the event lifecycle. We are also investing in producing educational content from live webinars to videos, blogs, infographics and regularly updated Q&As, all accessible [online](#).

What do associations need to do / consider in relation to GDPR?

In a nutshell GDPR gives EU citizens greater control over how their personal data is used anywhere in the world. As associations collect data of their members through multiple platforms including database management systems, websites, member events and registration systems, GDPR directly impacts how these bodies will collect, manage and protect the data. To comply with regulation associations must implement a comprehensive GDPR programme prioritising areas of the business with the highest risks such as consent, privacy and sensitive data. In practical terms this means reviewing current processes against GDPR guidelines including all subcontractors providing or processing personal data, assess risk levels and examine data and security framework and set up internal procedures for breach notifications. We are

helping our association clients and inviting them to use our educational resources to support their understanding of the new regulation.

What can Cvent do to help associations comply with the new regulation?

Following a detailed analysis of the regulations and how they impact events, Cvent products have been enhanced to support GDPR compliance for our customers and their attendees across the entire event lifecycle. Pre-event associations can benefit from event website and online registrations which only use essential cookies, legally certified privacy notifications to ensure members understand how their data will be processed, new fields to capture consent freely, the ability to edit and localise language and tracking and auditing capabilities. During the event associations should do away with manual sign in sheets, utilising OnArrival to seamlessly check-in attendees and securely print badges. Post event only members who consent will receive marketing communications. Members have the right to request their data and to be forgotten. With our dedicated process to monitor such requests data files can be provided within the 30-day timeframe or all personal data anonymised with metric information retained for accurate reporting. In addition, Cvent's global security monitoring and incident management footprint is capable of breach identification and response around the clock and across every time zone.

GDPR can be a daunting, but it's enforcement highlights best practice opportunities to drive the event industry forward by strengthening relationships between companies and their attendees. The true essence of GDPR is about behaving in a way that is transparent about how you will use people's personal information and builds trust with them.

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GLOBAL EXPANSION FOR NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

As the associations sector grows, it is logical that strong national associations consider overseas expansion. As associations set their own structures and membership rules, some membership bodies decide that their boundaries need not be limited to their own nation. This article will look at the factors in this decision and possible consequences. John Peacock, General Manager, Associations Forum

The question of expansion starts with examination of purpose. If an association is devoted to, say, the promotion of tourism in a city, state or province, it will not consider geographic expansion. However, if an association represents a profession or industry, it may be smart to provide quality services to professionals or businesses across a larger area.

Global expansion takes an initial financial investment, however it can pay off if future profit generated from the greater geographical coverage compensates for the start-up expenses.

American associations are the leaders in global expansion. As the superpower nation in the second half of the 20th century, the United States had the biggest economy and the largest associations in the world. Professionals and industry participants from other nations often attended US National Conferences, making American associations the global hub and aware that their offerings were often relevant to people and organisations around the world.

The United Kingdom also has global organisations such as Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The major Australian association with members of staff and offices overseas, particularly in Asia, is Certified Practising Accountants (CPA) Australia.

Associations do not have to be large to expand overseas. An impressive example in recent times is Biometrics Institute. Founded in 2001 in Australia, its mission is to service members and promote the responsible use of biometrics. The association was unique and specialist in a new field, rapidly gaining members from Australia and New Zealand in the first decade of

operations and had stable, but not large, finances.

In 2013 the CEO, Isabelle Moeller, and the Board agreed that the unique nature of the Biometrics Institute made it worthwhile to open operations in Europe. The CEO relocated from Sydney to London and replicated the successful model from the southern hemisphere.

Isabelle Moeller says the local to global expansion has been a success. *"The biometrics sector is international in nature, and we had proved that there was a need for an organisation such as ours which primarily focused upon the users of biometrics, rather than the suppliers."*

"Biometrics Institute did not have an equivalent association in other nations, so we were not encroaching upon existing operations of other membership bodies. We decided it would be easier to expand our model and services to the UK, continental Europe and recently the USA rather than assisting local biometrics users to start their own new association," said Ms Moeller.

"We have been very pleased with the results of the global expansion. As well as using the same infrastructure, brand and marketing to a wider potential membership, our members benefit from the exchange of ideas across borders in an international environment. Members regularly travel to attend our leading edge conferences and events in various nations and also connect across the globe through virtual meetings. Membership of Biometrics Institute has become more attractive and exciting for our members."

Global expansion has been assisted by a world that is more connected by rapid transport and instantaneous communications than at any time in its history. However, challenges remain in the different attitudes of national governments, cultural expectations and pricing.



Isabelle Moeller, Biometrics Institute

Another major challenge is corporate entity structure. It is sometimes difficult to establish a minimal-tax mutual membership body that has its head office in another nation, and the degree of independence of the local chapter committee often takes time to resolve.

However, in the experience of Associations Forum, global federations with constituent national associations as their members are harder to run than those that are transitioning from national to global.

JOHN PEACOCK is the General Manager of Associations Forum and is one of Australia's most experienced advisors to associations and charities and is a thought leader for the not-for profit sector

MORE INFORMATION

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FAIB SALARY BENCHMARK SURVEY: AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT SALARIES AND BENEFITS ACROSS ASSOCIATIONS IN BRUSSELS

The Federation of European and International Associations (FAIB) published the results of its benchmark survey of annual remuneration and benefits for NGOs, professional and trade associations in Brussels, with the support of its board members and its associate member, DKW.

"What's special about this survey is its breadth," commented FAIB President Adrian Harris. "There are indeed many good association and company lobbyist salary and benefit surveys published by different organisations, but what is special about our survey is that it goes in depth into the pay and benefits packages of its different categories of members – notably on the one hand classical trade and professional associations and on the other charity and NGO staff. No one has to date carried out such a fine analysis which highlights the sometimes striking differences within the Brussels association world."

This survey is based on data gathered on the remuneration and the fringe benefits of associations' permanent staff from 131 organisations. It covers all job categories, from top management to administrative support staff and will therefore serve as a useful guideline and tool for (international) non-profit associations (NPAs).

There were large variances in salary and benefits between organisations, much of which can often be explained by the type and size of organisation as well as the average age of the employees.

The most common benefits provided are thirteenth month salary (85%), luncheon vouchers (82%), extra legal holidays (78%), and travelling to and from the office by public transport (78%).

Only 65% of organisations have a pension scheme for all employees, 50% give eco-cheques and 56% offer hospitalisation insurance and 15% provide company cars.

Trade associations are much more likely to provide a pension scheme, mobile phone or company car, while NGOs/charities are more likely to provide flexible working hours and time off in lieu.

According to the survey, the median age of the CEOs/Secretary Generals is 50 years old with a slight majority (56%) being male. The median remuneration is between 7,000 and 8,000 gross euros per month with a total annual cost to the organisation between 120,000 and 150,000 euros.

There are, however, considerable differences between types and size of organisations: 61% of those working for trade associations with annual budgets above 1 million euros were paid more than 14,000 euros per month, while similar sized charities were generally paid between 7,000-8,000 euros.



The FAIB logo, consisting of a blue geometric shape made of interconnected lines, followed by the text "FAIB" in large blue letters and "be international... in Belgium" in smaller blue letters below it. Below the logo, the text "MORE INFORMATION" is written in bold black letters. Underneath, the email address "FAIB@FAIB.ORG" and the website "WWW.FAIB.ORG" are listed in bold black text. The entire content is enclosed in a white rectangular box with a thin black border. The background of the box shows a blurred image of a man in a blue suit standing on a stack of coins, similar to the one on the left.

YET ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION SUMMIT 2018

Reinforcing its role as Europe's leading meeting for non-profit sector professionals, the European Association Summit 2018 focus on quality and diversity delivered another great knowledge sharing event for international associations.

The 6th edition held on 8-9 March at SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE in Brussels gathered over 200 participants coming from different countries and diverse association activity areas. Around 150 association representatives had the opportunity to receive and give their insights at different sessions applying the “engage, collaborate and innovate” guiding principle of the 2018 event.

Organised by visit.brussels since its inception the European Association Summit (EAS) enhanced its partnerships as from this edition, having included to this year's programme sessions managed by ICCA and PCMA on events, in addition to those already developed by GAHP and longstanding Brussels based partners.

THURSDAY, A DYNAMIC FIRST DAY

During the two days of the Summit the participants had a myriad of themes to discover and join concise sessions at the various workshops, following an opening session animated by Bo Krüger.

Being a 2018 big topic also for associations, the GDPR was thoroughly explained by lawyers, IT specialists and association representatives. In parallel, a workshop permitted to discover the far reaching and effective approach to online campaigning of the Erasmus driven generation.

An introduction or refreshment of leadership skills and project management techniques was also featured at thematic sessions by practitioners also active in the academic world.

Sharing varied experiences about events organisation from the World Parkinson Coalition, the Euro-

pean Flavour Day and the ICCA first time attendee programme allowed to broaden the horizon on the matter. Combined with sessions on organisation, social media use and change management the first day workshops gave a good holistic overview covering items ranging from public relations to internal structure of an association.

While saying a lot about institutional issues and various challenges on future European Union financing framework the President of the Committee of the Regions, Mr. Karl-Heinz Lambertz, was also very explicit about the importance of personal relations and the need to discuss important issues at informal and relaxed opportunities.

Those words were very well received and served as an excellent invitation to move to the BIP.brussels building for the networking evening. Gathered around a moving food belt the participants could enjoy the delicious specialities of the Belgian cuisine, while talking to their peers and partners. Many of them participated in a quiz in which they had the opportunity to network and learn.

FROM COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE TOWARDS NETWORKING TECHNOLOGY

Friday's plenary opening session permitted to gather participants in small thematic groups where an inspirational journey took place allowing a deep dive giving an intimate opportunity to share views on advocacy, governance, strategy, membership, communications or administration.

Later, the workshops continued addressing the approach to events, with the PCMA's and European Society for Organ Transplantation experience,

membership engagement through top or grassroots driven approach with examples from Solar Power Europe and the International Sport and Culture Association, and the use of technologies in network creation from local to European perspective with Brussels Creative and ESOMAR.

In her closing speech the EAS 2018 Chair, Małgorzata Bartosik, Deputy General Secretary of Wind-Europe, reminded the great opportunity of gathering association professionals together willing to look for solutions and best practices among them to address various organisational and societal challenges.

As far as Headquarters Magazine is concerned, our team enjoyed a stimulating 2-day conference with plenty of moments to learn and network with association executives from different fields. This year's European Association Summit gave us the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with our Brussels-based association partners European Society of Association Executives (ESAE), Federation of European and International Associations (FAIB), Union of International Associations (UIA), European Cities Marketing (ECM) as well as our new partner the Solvay Executive Masters in International Association Management. Our highlights are the unmissable workshops on GDPR organised with experts in the matter by FAIB and the workshop on leadership coordinated by Ms. Nancy Carfrae (UIA) and with presented by Ms. Susan West, Managing Director of SJ West Leadership Consulting.



"It was a pleasure to lead a workshop about Engaging Events at the European Summit Association. It was an opportunity to share the learnings from our Flavour-Days project with other associations and at the same time to plant the seeds for new ideas in the future. Thanks to the preparation of the EAS team, it was a dynamic session with very fruitful interaction with the public. I look forward to next year's edition."

Jimena Gomez de la Flor
European Flavour Association (EFFA)
Brussels, Belgium

"The EAS 2018 in Brussels was a great mixture of content, know-how and networking. It was for me a wonderful opportunity to learn from other European and international associations how to grow and prosper. The event gave also a fantastic insight how to set up and run a new-to-be established International NGO in the heart of Europe, in Brussels."

Monika Łagodzińska
The Foundation for Lifelong Learning PERITIA
Poznań, Poland



We would also like to highlight the Association Knowledge Café organised by ESAE; this session encouraged participants to mingle with other associations and get inspired by their insights on different topics.

Thanks to EAS 2018, our team had the chance to meet Nicolas Hamblenne, associate of KOAN Law Firm in Brussels and expert on GDPR, whose interview you can read on page 34-35 of this new May edition of Headquarters.



All the information related to the European Association Summit is available on the event website

WWW.EASUMMIT.BRUSSELS

HIP TO BE SQUARE, HIP TO BE 60

SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE CELEBRATES ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE started out as a pioneering concept 60 years ago and went on to become one of the most important conference centres in the world.

SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, having hosted over 17,000 events and welcomed more than 10 million visitors, including heads of state, intellectuals, artists and scientists, for more than half a century. The venue has undoubtedly played a vital role in the economic growth of Belgium and fostered cooperation and relationships among communities of Brussels.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Formerly known as the Palais des Congrès, the venue was originally built for the 1958 World Expo, and has since revealed the capital's need for venues dedicated to hosting international conferences. Over the past decades, the venue has been transformed into "a conference centre worthy of its role as international capital of Europe," said Didier Reynders, Belgium's deputy prime minister at a recent press conference marking the special occasion of the Centre's 60th anniversary.

Thanks to its central location (only 2 minutes' walk from Central Station) in the heart of the city surrounded by hotels, museums and attractions, SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE is a popular venue of choice for many world renowned events, such as International Symposium on Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine (ISICEM), the world's biggest event of its kind with some 6,000 participants. "There are very few cities in the world that can offer a conference centre right in its heart; our participants love it," said professor Jean-Louis Vincent, founder and organiser of ISICEM.

As Brussels is one of the leading European destinations for international conferences and meetings, the facility has helped put Brussels on the global map. "More than ever, Brussels can rely on SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE to develop its economy and boost its appeal, thus confirming... Brussels' position as the world's no.1 conference city," said Ariane Deguelle, CEO of GL Events Benelux, the company that has managed the venue since 2009.

ARTISTIC TRIUMPH

From an underground building that was home to three enormous murals by René Magritte, Paul Delvaux and Louis Van Lint (still lovingly preserved to this day), SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE underwent a major extension and renovation in 2009 that transformed the facility into an exceptional contemporary venue with plenty of natural daylight and open spaces. For instance, a boldly designed, 13 metres-tall glass cube brings natural light to the underground levels, creating an inspirational environment for networking events.

With a total of 13,000m² multi-purpose space - including four auditoria offering a total of 2,150 seats, two exhibition halls with a surface area of 6,000m² and 23 multi-purpose rooms - the facility boasts the Panoramic Hall, a penthouse with a breathtaking view of the capital; and opportunities to partner with the nearby BOZAR and its stunning Henry Le Boeuf Hall (2,200 seats) for bigger events.

Renamed as SQUARE in 2009, the unique venue strikes a perfect balance between atmosphere and

functionality, as well as flexibility of the spaces and modernity of the facilities, meeting the needs of all sorts of events, ranging from summit and conferences to business conventions and exhibitions to product launches and gala dinners.

A BRIGHT-LOOKING FUTURE

SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE plans to focus on its collaboration with visit.brussels and other Belgian institutions to promote medical conferences, as Brussels is in fact a centre of excellence in healthcare and home to the headquarters of more than 2,000 international organisations, mostly in five key clusters: life sciences and biopharma, high-tech and sustainable development, media and creative industries, business services, and information and communications technology (ICT).

On the special occasion of its 60th anniversary, SQUARE is excited to offer the opportunity for a Brussels-based association/company in one of the five above mentioned sectors to hold its first event at the facility. Furthermore, the event is required to gather a minimum of 100 participants, including 30% of international delegates who will spend at least one night in Brussels.

FOCUS ON THE CHINESE MARKET

Last but not least, within the context of the European year promoting tourism between China and the European Union, SQUARE has decided to entrust its development unit with this incredibly complex market, which could be immensely valuable from an economic perspective. This is an investment that

should bear fruit in the medium term, and help Brussels and Belgium continue to be the nerve centre of relationships between Europe and China.

Now with a newly designed logo, SQUARE-BRUSSELS CONVENTION CENTRE will continue to build on their 60 years of success and serve as a generator of significant economic benefits for the region and beyond by hosting international and national conventions in a world-class facility.



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60 YEARS**



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ASSOCIATIONS NEED TO START PREPARING NOW FOR 2019, A YEAR OF CHANGE AT THE HEART OF THE EU

The countdown to the European Parliament elections in May 2019 is a good time for associations to take stock and audit their advocacy approach before a new wave of MEPs and Commissioners set the policy agenda for 2020 and beyond.



RICHARD STEEL

2019 will not only see a reshuffle of key Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), an institution growing in status and legislative power, but also a new European Commission, under a new President and with a new 5-year programme that will influence every sector and business. In 2014, the newly elected Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, promised to change the culture in Brussels from a legislative sausage-machine, churning out an average of over 120 proposals a year, to a more targeted body that promised to be “big on the big things and small on the small things”. Brussels was tired of being bashed for “interfering” in issues that people increasingly felt were none of its business. So Juncker set out 10 key priorities on which his 5-year term should be judged, focusing on areas where Brussels could bring added value, for example in building a real internal market in energy or digital technology.

HOW CAN ASSOCIATIONS PREPARE FOR THE BUMPY ROAD AHEAD

So what lies ahead for the next 5 years and how can you ensure that your association is not only ready to adapt to the new regime but influence its shape? Now is the time to be having those discussions about how to present yourself to a whole new set of players, with an anticipated 50% turnover of MEPs. How can you get a foot in the door early to explain what you do, why you’re relevant to policy makers and perhaps most importantly what you can do to help meet their new political agenda?

While starting those internal discussions now is timely, it’s too early to forecast what shape those new EU institutions will take in the summer of 2019. The European elections in 2014 already saw a worrying rise in nationalist and populist parties, with forces hostile to the direction the EU was taking representing about one-third of the seats. Recent election results across Europe suggest that this percentage could grow even higher. A far-right party is now in coalition in Austria and could even lead the government in Italy. One of Brussels most ardent critics, Victor Orban in Hungary, has just seen his majority grow, and his tough stance on immigration looks likely to be played out again and again in the May 2019 elections.

All of this could lead to a European Parliament struggling to find a workable majority and a future work programme that a pro-European majority can work behind. Associations, like other stakeholders,

will have to work out which MEPs it can do business with and which ones it doesn’t risk being associated with. European associations may have to work far more closely with their national counterparts in those countries where large numbers of MEPs are elected on an anti-Brussels ticket if they hope to get their message across. The coherence of the European Commission could also be jeopardised if several of its new Members hail from nationalist parties that refuse to accept the collegiate nature of the Commission’s decision-making. Creative thinking and an ability to adapt rapidly to the changing situation are going to be essential for any association wanting to be heard above the noise.

BREXIT IS OFFICIALLY UPON US

Two other events in 2019 will further complicate this rapidly changing scene and will need to be addressed. The UK will leave the EU on 29 March 2019 and European associations will need to be in a position to adapt to the new circumstances. Decisions will need to be taken on how to work with British counterparts. The agreement on a transition period where EU rules will still apply in the UK until the end of 2020 will allow more time to adjust but European associations will have to get used to dealing with the UK as a third country.

One of the most immediate consequences of Brexit will be the 13-14% drop in the EU budget and 2019 will also mark a critical time in the adoption of a new long term budget post-2020. Associations that have

benefited from EU funding will need to pay particular attention to where the cuts come and try and ensure that their activities remain part of the more limited priority areas where funding will be focused. Priority areas are likely to include security, defence, migration, border control and macro-economic stability.

ADVANCING YOUR INTERESTS

At Interel we are busy helping clients prepare for these changes and advancing their interests by encouraging them to review their advocacy strategy, channels of communication, tools and approaches. It's good to get an external perspective on whether you're getting your message across in the most effective way and helping to pose the difficult questions.

- ▶ Are there new tools like eAdvocacy that you should be using?
- ▶ Have you got the necessary monitoring tools?
- ▶ Do you have the right people in place?
- ▶ Do you fully understand your members' needs?
- ▶ Are you collaborating effectively with their experts to ensure you are aligned in your approach?

Whether you're a trade association or professional society, now is the time to be building coalitions to advance your mission, address issues and look beyond similar associations to consider NGOs or industry partners. Your impact, access and know-how could multiply by teaming up with a multitude of partners. While focus is on the Parliament and Commission, associations should leverage their members to convey key messages to national governments and other EU bodies relevant to their mission, such as the Committee of the Regions.

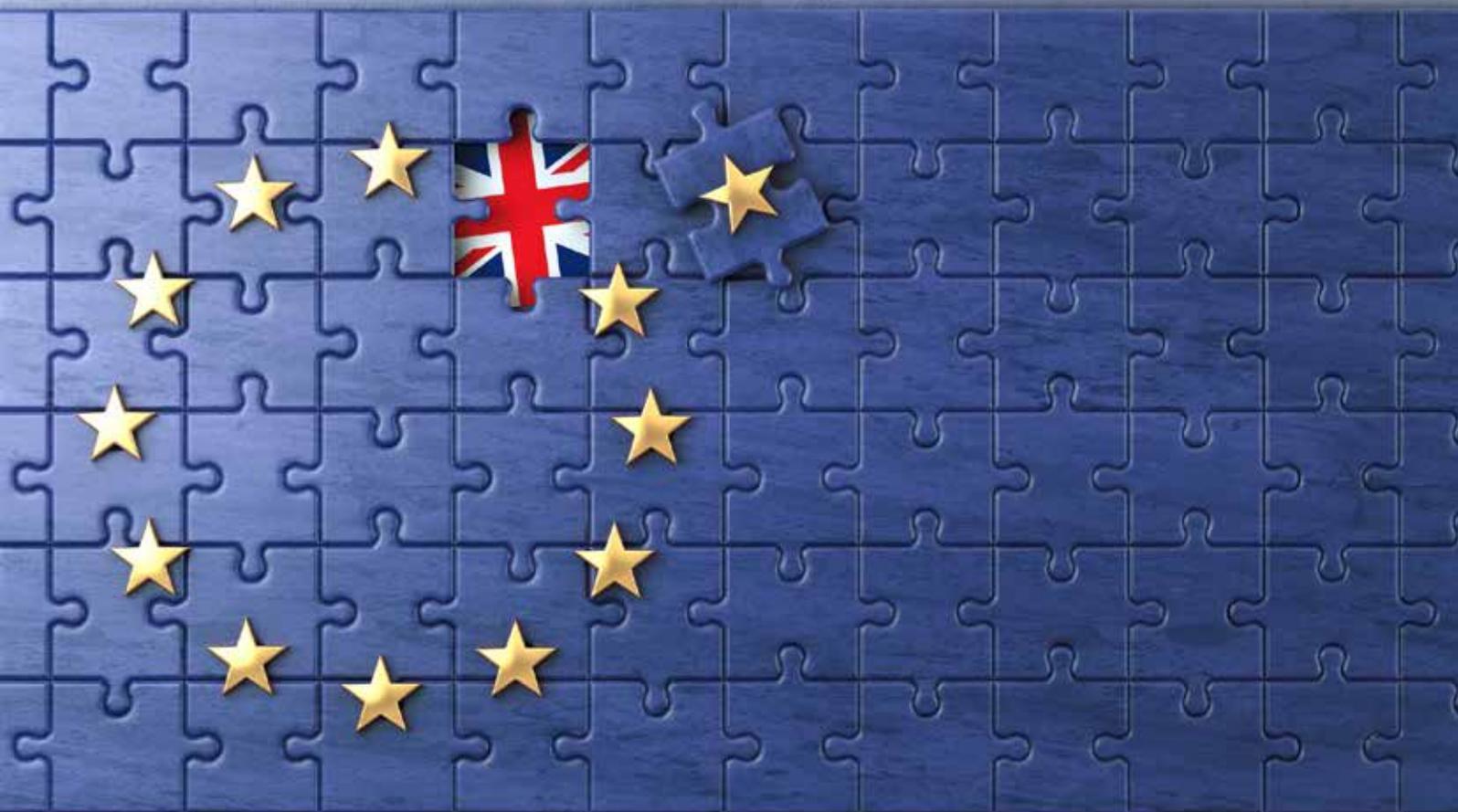
Now is the time to prepare because you can be sure that everybody else is.



This article is authored by
RICHARD STEEL, Senior Associate, Interel

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CONVENE 2018 DELIVERS GREAT RESULTS IN VILNIUS

The sixth edition of CONVENE gathered over 250 hosted buyers and exhibitors from various sectors in the Baltic Sea region and beyond, as well as a number of notable speakers leading the event's education programme, as the host city of Vilnius celebrated the centenary of Lithuanian independence

Held at LITEXPO on February 14-15, the annual event brought together more than 165 hosted buyers from 30 countries such as Germany, the UK, France, USA, Italy, Russia, Benelux and Scandinavia, 86 exhibitors from the Baltic Sea Region, as well as guest exhibitors from Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine and Belarus.

The ratio of hosted buyers to exhibitors was 2:1, the highest among all trade shows dedicated to the meeting industry, according to Jolanta Beniulienė, director of the CONVENE. "Once again, CONVENE is giving us another opportunity to strengthen the region's meeting industry and build on the success of our previous events. The Baltic Sea Region has a lot to offer meeting planners from around Europe and across the globe," Beniulienė said.

This year, the international hosted buyers included representatives from international corporations, associations, and event planning agencies such as Bank of America Merrill Lynch, World Association for Medical Law, Oriflame, Eurofedop, Cadillac and MTV Networks Europe.

Organised by the Vilnius Convention Bureau, the event also showcased the Lithuanian capital as a prominent meeting destination in the Baltic Sea region. Set amid the backdrop of festivities and

celebrations marking the centenary of Lithuania's independence, CONVENE 2018 featured networking events in memorable venues such as Radisson Blu Hotel Lietuva, whose Skybar on the 22nd floor offers panoramic views of the Old Town; and the Villus Town Hall, a popular venue for concerts, performances and conferences where delegates enjoyed an eclectic mix of live traditional folk music and modern electronic music.

Besides pre-scheduled meetings, delegates also participated in quality education sessions that covered a wide spectrum of topics including the latest global meetings and events forecasts (by Ralph Knoblauch of American Express Meetings & Events and Mark Scales of Bank Sadlers), the

impact of terrorism on events (by Linda Pereira of CPL Meetings & Events), and various ways to creative innovative conferences (by Shocklogic's John Martinez), and improvement of client-agency relationships (by Jan Gemrich from Foccus Design). Furthermore, the programme featured a panel discussion on how the shifting nature of meetings affected destination and venue choices. There were also "Meet the Expert" sessions, which offered participants to engage in discussions in a less formal setting.

"The emphasis for the sixth edition of CONVENE has been on quality, and our Education Programme really reflects that. These sessions are an important part of our event and we're happy to be able to give participants an opportunity to engage in fresh ideas and constructive dialogue," Beniulienė said.

The next edition of CONVENE will again take place in Vilnius on 14-15 February, 2019.



MORE INFORMATION

Vilnius Convention Bureau

VITA.ZILINSKAITE@VILNIUS.LT
WWW.VILNIUS-CONVENTION.LT



GDANSK A CITY OF SURPRISE BY THE BALTIC SEA

The Baltic port city in Northern Poland is a rapidly evolving destination with a long, fascinating history and a cosmopolitan vibe. Its easy access to Sopot, a resort city in the well-known “Polish Riviera”, makes Gdansk a unique destination packed with culture, history and natural beauty.

With a history of over a thousand years, Gdansk has always been a meeting point of different kingdoms, cultures, and people (once home to famous intellectuals like Schopenhauer and Fahrenheit).

Ranked as the third Best European Destination in 2017 in an online poll with more than 420,000 participants, Gdansk has become one of Europe's hottest destinations with over 30 direct flights from the region. The post-CONVENE fam trip on February 15-17 was a wonderful opportunity to discover Gdansk's distinctive charm and character.

Walking around the Old Town is a sheer delight with its canals, wooden merchant houses and gothic towers. The Royal Way showcases some of the city's most stunning architecture such as opulent renaissance houses, the Town Hall and the Artus Court. Gdansk is the world capital of amber, and the picturesque Mariacka Street is famous for amber shopping.

Just about 20 minutes by car from the city and the airport, Amber Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre is a fitting venue for the world's amber capital. Opened in 2012, the complex consists of three integrated exhibition halls with a total floor space of 12,000 sq metres and a conference centre with four rooms for 1,058 participants. Delegates could head over to Energa Gdansk Stadium, which hosted the 2012 UEFA European Championship, for a guided tour of dressing rooms, VIP areas and Lechia Museum.

Opened in 2014, Gdańsk Shakespeare Theatre is testament to the city's close ties with Shakespearean theatre. Featuring high-tech facilities and a uniquely designed retractable roof, the elegantly minimalist

and daylight-filled venue is a modern reconstruction of a 17th century Elizabethan playhouse.

Gdansk is a fast-growing industrial and economic hub for IT startups, shipbuilding and oil with a strong academic sector and new hotels springing up every now and then (the latest being Holiday Inn Gdansk City Centre, set to open in 2019, next to AmberSky, Gdansk's answer to the London Eye). The centrally located and recently refurbished PURO Hotel features an eight-story atrium, stylish interiors, quirky furniture, and curated art collections, a trademark of the hotel brand.

Other notable hotels include Mercure Gdańsk Stare Miasto, one of Gdansk's highest buildings; Hilton Gdansk, overlooking the canal with quality meeting

facilities; Hotel Gdansk, located by the yacht marina with a historical beer brewery.

For history buffs, there is much to see in Gdansk, where the WWII broke out and the anti-communist Solidarity movement started. Both European Solidarity Centre and World War II Museum are dedicated to the conflicts with touching and inspiring exhibits in beautifully designed spaces.

Merely a 15-minute train ride away, Sopot is a famous spa resort featuring cafes, restaurants, art galleries and sophisticated hotels such as the glamorous Sofitel Grand Sopot and the luxurious Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Conference Center & Spa. The streets and beaches are especially crowded during the summer.



MORE INFORMATION

Gdansk Convention Bureau

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11TH EDITION OF FIEXPO LATIN AMERICA

JUNE 4-6, 2018

The final countdown to the next edition of FIEXPO Latin America meeting has begun!

From June 4 to 6, we will meet again in Santiago de Chile, the event's host city until 2019. The city will shine in all its magnificent splendor, offering a wealth of commercial and cultural activities, together with a sophisticated cuisine.

The eleventh edition of the largest destination promoting platform in Latin America that sponsors exhibitions, conventions, conferences, fairs, business meetings and incentive trips is preparing several new features, including the "Workshop and Technical Visit" to the city of Concepción and a FIEXPO space for young professionals called "Next generation summit".

"WORKSHOP AND TECHNICAL VISIT" IN CONCEPCIÓN

JUNE 1-3, 2018

From June 1 to 3, the first "Workshop and Technical Visit" will take place in Concepción.

In response to the great interest of buyers to explore new opportunities, this year FIEXPO is adding a workshop with a technical visit to Concepcion, capital of the Bío Bío Region, one of the country's most important financial, commercial and service centers, and university metropolis by excellence.

The meeting will consist of informative lectures and tours to showcase the city's many attractive options for international events.

For FIEXPO directors - Arnaldo Nardone and Sergio Baritussio - this new project is the natural result of the growth of the fair, as well as the efforts and vision of the Chilean institutions.

"NEXT GENERATION SUMMIT" BY FIEXPO

JUNE 4

For the first time FIEXPO will have a space aimed at enhancing the skills of the next generation of professionals in the MICE sector and to show them the latest issues and trends in the area hands on.

NGS offers a unique opportunity to 25 professionals under 30 years of age, with from one to three years of experience in this field.

Applicants should be working for ICCA member companies, be exhibitors at FIEXPO or be executives of professional associations.

Hence, FIEXPO is creating this space for young professionals from the sector to share experiences and learn from the opinion leaders in the meetings industry through educational talks and social activities to enhance their network of contacts.



AFTER A YEARS-LONG WAIT COSTA RICA INAUGURATES BRAND NEW CONVENTION CENTER

After a years-long wait, Costa Rica has opened a brand new Convention Center, which will act as a showcase for the country, displaying it as a viable destination for the meeting industry.

Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of Costa Rica, had this to say: *"Over the course of this administration, we've given tourism the priority it deserves, which is why we've been able to make the Convention Center a reality, a project which had been put off, yet which without a doubt will boost the tourism industry, creating benefits throughout the country."*

Mauricio Ventura, the Minister of Tourism, noted that *"the Convention Center is the country's launching point for a wider projection into the meeting tourism sector, in which success depends on the quality of services offered; where it depends on the continuity and follow-through that we've applied to our strategy to position ourselves in this profitable industry, and on our continuing partnerships with the private sector."*

"Nearly three years ago, when I committed to lead my country's Ministry of Tourism, the construction of the Convention Center was the main goal that the President and I set for ourselves. We were able to silence many naysayers along the way with the right attitude, and we were able to overcome skepticism with determination and dedication. After a years-long wait, Costa Rica now has first-world infrastructure," Ventura stated.

POWERFUL STRATEGY

The Costa Rican Tourism Board has developed an aggressive strategy to compete in the meeting tourism sector. Part of this strategy has been to participate in specialized business tourism trade fairs over the last three years, as well as developing a promotional plan to break into this niche, with the help of world-class expert advisors.

One of the main results has been the strengthening of the Convention Bureau, which has become a key actor in bringing conventions to the country.

According to Mr. Ventura, this strategy has allowed Costa Rica to be noticed in the industry. The country has climbed 10 positions in the global ranking of meeting tourism compiled by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), ascending from 63rd to 53rd place out of 200 countries. This is just one spot away from Panama, which has been ahead for many years.

Costa Rica has also received the region's biggest prize (Forum Latinoamericano) for its promotion of the meetings industry.

To date, around 80 international congresses have been confirmed in Costa Rica between 2017 and 2021, which will generate an economic impact of around \$250 million, a figure that grows every day.

"Our tourism sector is stronger, because at the end of the day we've shown that the public sector can take on projects, complete them on time, and carry them out with quality and a commercial vision that backs them up," Ventura concluded.

This article was provided by EVENTOS LATINOAMERICANOS, the only publication specialized in the meeting and incentive market with coverage and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean. A partner of Headquarters Magazine.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.CRCONVENTIONCENTER.COM



“BEING POSITIVE AND KIND WILL TAKE YOU A LONG WAY”

A CHAT WITH MICHELLE CROWLEY,
PCMA'S VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL
GROWTH & INNOVATION

Michelle Crowley, Vice President, Global Growth & Innovation for Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), shared her thoughts on the importance of education and words of advice for the youth in the industry during her participation as a panel member in Dubai Association Conference. Text by Vikas Tembhare

PCMA always emphasises a quality education for the meeting industry. How do you differentiate it?

PCMA's vision statement is, "Driving global economic and social transformation through business events." This really captures PCMA's commitment and our industry's potential. Personal and professional development is a key component of creating progress that leads to individual and organisational success. PCMA's goal is to drive this by creating environments for collaboration, experimentation and true learning.

What are the PCMA's core strategies for adding more values to the emerging markets?

Our core strategy is to tailor content, experience and commerce activities to the audience based on how they want to interact and consume content. PCMA is an organisation that listens and works with thought leaders, as well as decision makers, to understand and discuss challenging issues that organisations are facing or will be facing in the future. By providing engagement offerings face-to-face, digitally, print, live events, and at all different hours, our audience can participate on their preferred channel at their preferred time of day.

How do you describe the Middle East Meeting Forum's success?

The event allowed PCMA members interested in the region to learn what is happening locally, understand business nuances and make connections that will lead them to success in the region. The education programme allowed for debate and deep discussion on timely topics to the global audience. PCMA also appreciates the continued support and collaboration with Dubai Business Events.

What messages do you have for the young people working in the industry?

To be curious, adaptable and have a positive attitude. If you are curious, you likely have a desire to learn and are open to change. Business events are always changing, you must be willing to adapt, be flexible and not be afraid to jump in. Finally, having a positive attitude, being a team player and simply being kind will take you a long way. Kindness is an extremely valuable currency and should be utilized no matter your pay grade.



MORE INFORMATION

WWW.PCMA.ORG

MELBOURNE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE UPDATE

Melbourne is soon to welcome an AUD \$200 million expansion to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC). Set to open in mid 2018, the additional space means MCEC will be the largest convention and exhibition space in Australia, taking the total size to over 70,000 square metres.

Energy use for the MCEC expansion will be offset by a wind farm project, that will enable the venue to purchase renewable energy certificates equivalent to the projected electricity consumption for the expansion.

MCEC's Chief Operating Officer, Leighton Wood said the MCEC was inspired to become involved in this project because it recognised the positive difference it would make for the wider community.

"As an important public asset, it is our duty to improve our environmental impact and live up to the sustainability expectations of our stakeholders – our customers, our employees, our Club Melbourne Ambassadors, and our local community."

Among the new features of the expansion will be 9,000 square metres of flexible spaces that can be quickly and easily adapted to cater for different style events - from boardroom to ballroom to cocktail function and more. New additions include a 1,000 seat theatre, additional exhibition halls and meeting rooms, a banquet room and more dining options.

Commenting on the flexible spaces that the venue will boast, Director of Strategy and Innovation, MCEC, Michael Walsh said: "To create a truly innovative space, we listened to our customers. There is demand for greater efficiencies when it comes to hosting events. Businesses want to avoid logistical nightmares moving large groups of people from a large convention centre to an intimate gala dinner space".

Some features already completed at the venue are a new central staircase, a skylight over the new foyer space and distinctive gold exterior panels to represent Victoria's historic goldfields.

In line with Melbourne's reputation for food, the expanded MCEC will continue to focus on locally sourced food, offering bespoke menus based on delegate tastes and what's in season.

The expansion is part of a larger Melbourne project that includes the recently opened 347-room Novotel Melbourne South Wharf. The new four-star property is fully integrated with the MCEC, connecting delegates directly to the centre through the hotel's lobby.



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A SMALL COUNTRY **WITH** **A BIG SPIRIT**

Finland is a small country on a global scale. The population of Finland makes up just 0.07 per cent of the world's population and its area the same proportion of the world's area. But even a small country can jump to the top of the world, and this is what Finland has done: in international comparisons of the positive aspects of different countries, Finland is often ranked among the top along with other Nordic countries.

The recent World Happiness Report 2018 published by the UN ranks Finland the happiest country in the world. Finland has also been ranked the most stable, safest and best governed country in the world. Furthermore it is among the least corrupt and the most socially progressive.

Is this all too good to be true? If you have any doubts, come and find out for yourself and experience the hidden gem of Northern Europe!

The capital Helsinki is a city of contrasts that combines urban culture with pure nature. From any hotel in Helsinki guests can walk to the seashore

or a green park in just minutes. Unforgettable outdoor destinations include the many islands in the archipelago, which are perfect for day trips.

Visitors are finding their way to Finland and the nation's capital in increasing numbers. In 2017 Helsinki attracted more visitors than ever before. In addition several of the international congresses hosted by Helsinki in 2017 attracted record attendances and actually exceeded the anticipated number of participants.

Helsinki is responding to the increasing number of visitors by welcoming a number of new hotels. The

already generous selection of 15 000 hotel rooms in the capital region will be expanded by at least 2000 additional rooms in the coming years, and even more are on the drawing board. This means Helsinki will be even better equipped to welcome big events in the future.

Major international association meetings that Helsinki has been proud to host recently include ESHRE 2016 (Annual Meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology) with almost 10,000 delegates and EAACI 2017 (European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology) with more than 8000 delegates.



Helsinki



FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.VISITFINLAND.FI
WWW.MEETHELSINKI.FI

SHE MEANS BUSINESS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT IMEX 2018 IN FRANKFURT

Gender equality and female empowerment have never been higher on the agenda and these issues are now, rightly, being given the due recognition they deserve – across the meetings and events sector – and society at large. At a news conference during EduMonday at IMEX in Frankfurt, pioneering women will share their experiences, provide valuable advice and inspire action.

Inspirational women from around the world will share their perspectives on the current climate at **She Means Business**, taking place the day before the show on Monday 14 May. Meeting and event strategists – both female and male – are invited to network and learn from a packed programme of highly influential speakers and mentors.

PIONEERING WOMEN

The speakers are inspirational women from diverse backgrounds and sectors. What unites them is that they have overcome challenges and broken boundaries. The day starts with **'Women in space'**, where Major Nicola Baumann, one of Germany's only three female Eurofighter pilots, and Laura Winterling, a former astronaut instructor and CEO of Space Time Concepts GmbH, will be delivering the keynote.

Female business leaders from backgrounds including tech, finance and the UN share their personal perspectives on issues including empowering women in the workplace, eradicating the gender pay gap and increasing leadership positions held by women.

The UN's Women's Empowerment Principles are a set of guidelines for businesses on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. Chairwoman of the UN Women National Committee, Germany, Karin Nordmeyer explores these in her session, part of the Women in Business strand.

Karin, can you please tell us something about the UN's Women's Empowerment Principles campaign? Do you see starting points for the international meeting industry here?

The Women's Empowerment Principles are 7 principles for empowering women in business. More than 1,700 CEOs worldwide have already signed this commitment. The initiative offers ideal starting points for all sectors, as it aims to change structures and mechanisms of action. When UN Women emerged as an independent institution, the aim was to create new, altered structures so that women had the opportunity to bring their full potential to life. It's about putting the communication of women and men on an equal footing - on one "level". The next step is to encourage and enable women to use these new and changed structures. This sequence is vitally important. The existing language in existing management levels is very masculine - we want to change that.

These "Women Empowerment Principles" can be transported to any industry. The task is to break down this approach to individual industries and environments - such as the meetings and events industry - and to change structures and develop models so that women can live to their full potential and strengths.

What would you like to pass on - be it professionally, in a social environment and also as chairwoman of the German Committee for UN Women?

My advice to young women is this: carefully consider what you want to accomplish. Ask yourself, "What can I do? And where and how can I apply this knowledge in the most effective and meaningful way?"

I am well aware that this is a very difficult and sometimes painful process - to recognise and work out one's own potential, to honestly ask these questions. I want to urge all women: "Embrace these tough questions! Research and review ideas, discard them, look for role models!"

Not all leadership positions are worth aspiring to; other professional positions are valuable too! Whether its unpaid volunteer jobs or becoming a role model/mentor, or developing a completely new model - with or without children... My advice, especially to young women, is: "do not let these important life decisions slip from your hands!"

This applies across all sectors and internationally. But not all women have the same starting conditions. This is where UN Women comes in; our credo is "Strengthen women by instilling their meaning in life."

GENDER PARITY AND EMPOWERMENT

The Global Summit of Women, designed to drive women's advancement in the global economy, takes place in Sydney this year. At the Women in Events strand, Lyn Lewis-Smith, CEO of Business Events Sydney, is set to share her personal insights and solutions gained as host city for this renowned business and economic forum, as well as best practice examples of organisations driving a cultural shift to support businesswomen.

Lyn, you are speaking at the first She Means Business conference on the day prior to IMEX in Frankfurt. This event celebrates women in the international event industry. Why do you see that the gender discussion is crucial especially for the global Business Events industry and why now?

The gender discussion is crucial for any industry, in both the public and private sector.

We have come a long way, but there is still a long way to go. And the only way we will get where we need to be is to keep talking about it, keep setting bold targets to focus us, and keep throwing a spotlight on what needs to change.

We have so many incredibly talented women within the business events industry, and tourism more broadly, and that is something we should celebrate. However, there are still nowhere near enough women at the very top of the industry, and this is why we need to continue the conversation within our industry as much as any other.



Lyn Lewis-Smith



Karin Nordmeyer

Karin and Lyn will be speaking at the first **SHE MEANS BUSINESS** conference taking place on 14 May 2018, as part of IMEX in Frankfurt.

SHE MEANS BUSINESS rounds off with 'Women in the meetings industry – on eye level with men?' - a panel discussion moderated by Sheriff Karamat, CEO of PCMA, discussing how a commitment to gender equality and diversity can lead to positive change and new opportunities. This is followed by the opportunity for in-depth roundtable discussions and networking.

THE FIRST SHE MEANS BUSINESS CONFERENCE TAKES PLACE ON 14 MAY 2018, DURING EDUMONDAY AT IMEX IN FRANKFURT.



IMEX IN FRANKFURT TAKES PLACE 15 - 17 MAY. REGISTRATION IS FREE.
WWW.IMEX-FRANKFURT.COM

AN INTRODUCTION: HEAVENLY HANGZHOU

“There is paradise above, and there is Suzhou and Hangzhou on Earth” - this ancient saying encapsulates the poetic beauty of these two cities, comparable to heaven like a mirror image. Ken Tan reports

This graceful southern city is also one of the most vigorous in China, boasting strong economic development and high gross national income. Named one of the top 10 most excellent mainland China business cities in a Forbes China survey, major industries like technology of computer network and communication, biological medicine, energy conservation and environment protection, new energy resources, cultural and creative industries are all developing rapidly.

Hangzhou, the capital city of Zhejiang Province, is located at the Yangtze River delta of China. It covers an area of 16,596km² with a population of more than 9 million. Hangzhou is well-connected within China's domestic and international transportation network, making it the perfect access point for delegates looking to forge partnerships with Hangzhou's

dynamic private sector and key industries. More than 200 domestic and international air routes now link Hangzhou to the rest of the world with direct connections to over 35 domestic and international cities. Non-stop services to Lisbon, Los Angeles, Madrid, Singapore and Sydney have been added since 2017.

There are also considerable land transportation upgrades in recent years. With China's high-speed railway network covering all domestic large and middle-sized cities, Shanghai is just a convenient 48 minutes bullet train ride away, and it only takes 4.5 hours to get from Hangzhou to Beijing. Increasingly demonstrating its strong infrastructure competence as a MICE destination, a large number of spacious conference venues were built, such as the Hangzhou International Expo Center - a multi-

format complex of conference, exhibition, catering, tourism, hotels, commercial and office buildings. Many renowned international hotel groups are establishing a presence in the city, further enriching the venue choices in hotel clusters such as downtown, Qianjiang New CBD and Xiaoshan District.

Like a seal of international approval that confirms China's status as global economic savior, Hangzhou hosted the G20 Summit in 2016, where leaders of the world's 20 largest economies like (Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin, Angela Merkel and Justin Trudeau to name a few) convened in the “paradise on earth.”

Hangzhou's breathtaking natural offerings include the tranquil waters of the West Lake. Listed as a



“上有天堂， 下有苏杭”

(shàng yǒu tiān táng , xià yǒu Sū Háng)

“There is paradise above, and there is Suzhou and Hangzhou on Earth”

World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2011, the picturesque West Lake is celebrated by poets and painters since the 9th century for its natural beauty and historic relics. Described by UNESCO as “an idealized fusion between humans and nature”, this idyllic fable-like setting is embraced by mountains on three sides. Its total area of 6.5km² is enshrined with temples, pavilions, islands that are accessible by boat, endless rows of romantic willow trees and arresting gardens.

Weaving in a taste of authentic Chinese culture into any MICE programme is easy. Delegates can take the opportunity to relax and unwind drifting on Caofang boat amid the spectacular scenery of the Grand Canal (the longest and one of the world’s oldest canal), discover the rustic farming life on the peaceful Xixi Wetlands, experience the

rich tea culture and explore Jiangnan embroidery. Hangzhou is the home of silk, China’s representative gift. Besides purchasing exquisite silk products, delegates can have deep silk experience at the China Silk Museum. No other Chinese souvenir can be as special and personal as a self-made Chinese Seal.

Hangzhou is a premier MICE destination that truly inspires new connections. Their distinct and increasingly influential MICE brand is expected to have more tremendous growth in advance of its hosting of the 2022 Asian Games. Come experience the abundant and unique resources, high service standards, and flair for innovation that makes Hangzhou the destination of choice for international meeting organisers.

Hangzhou,
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FOR MORE INFORMATION
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A CITY WITH VALUES THE HAGUE TAKES DESTINATION BRANDING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Having an effective city branding strategy in place is treated as being crucial for becoming a widely recognised and desirable event destination. According branding strategies are often used for racing other destinations by means of displaying appealing images and assets of the city. However, city branding needs to be about far more than selling appealing images.

Connecting visitors to what the city represents, and the creation of authentic metaphors is what matters. The Hague is a fascinating example of the latter as the city internalises its reputation as International City of Peace and Justice into its every vein. Being the second largest UN city, home to hundreds of international organisations, the famous Peace Palace and the International Court of Justice, The Hague continuously strengthens its reputation as a highly desirable event destination for events with shared values. Karsten Klein, Deputy Mayor of The Hague, states that 'The Hague is the International City of Peace and Justice, a global hub and frontrunner in sectors such as cyber security. Conferences and events that are brought to The Hague should fit in the profile of the city and reflect what it stands for'. Illustrating examples are the following large-scale events which favoured the city as an event destination for the ideals it represents.

WORLD JUSTICE FORUM V

The World Justice Project chose The Hague as their host for a second time because they felt the city's values mirrored their organisation's mission. The World Justice Forum V brought together hundreds of global leaders within several sectors to develop collaborative solutions for advancing peace, opportunity,

and equity worldwide. The Hague Convention Bureau (THCB) helped to create a congress that promoted an open atmosphere where delegates felt safe and could work together. Nancy Ward, Chief Engagement Officer for the World Justice Project, concluded that 'The Hague is not only deeply committed to peace and justice, but also to innovation — it was a wonderful match for us'.

UN PUBLIC SERVICE FORUM

For two days, more than 500 UN participants from multiple countries joined forces in The Hague — the second UN city in the world. The event's theme centred around The Future is Now — Accelerating Public Service Innovation for Agenda 2030. International delegates, from ministers to high-level decisions-makers, came together to discuss the future of public services for global citizens. The Hague served as the perfect stage for this event as the city reflects constant change for a better world.

ONE YOUNG WORLD SUMMIT 2018

The One Young World Summit, which will reside in The Hague on 17 – 20 October 2018, annually gathers the brightest young leaders from around the world to connect and empower them for creating positive

change. Some of the world's most influential business, political and humanitarian leaders will join the debate and act as One Young World Counsellors. Past counsellors included Justin Trudeau, Emma Watson, Kofi Annan and Sir Richard Branson. When announcing The Hague as host city for this year's summit One Young World stated that 'The Hague put forward an impressive and passionate proposal, which, coupled with its standing as the International City of Peace and Justice, caught the attention of the One Young World bid committee.'

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Hague.

Convention Bureau

conventionbureau.thehague.com





KAOHSIUNG

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ICCA  2020



KAOHSIUNG CALLING

TAIWAN'S HARBOUR CAPITAL

MEET TAIWAN, a MICE promotion program regulated by Taiwan's Bureau of Foreign Trade (BOFT), Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA), has been working tirelessly to turn Taiwan into a leader of outstanding MICE services for a decade. The program attracts over hundreds business events and international meetings yearly, successfully increasing international recognition and boosting domestic advantages. As MEET TAIWAN promoting Taiwan to the best meeting destination, the local city governments spare no efforts to enhance Taiwanese MICE cities—one success being Taiwan's southern harbour city of Kaohsiung.

TRANSFORMING KAOHSIUNG

With a river called Love crisscrossing the city, one can expect an experience close to the heart. Known as the 'Harbour Capital' of Taiwan, Kaohsiung has always been associated with the river, maritime transportation, year-round warm climate, the ocean, coral reefs, and mountains. With abundant nature, a strategic location, and a cultural melting pot that includes Chinese, Hakka, and aboriginal cultures, Kaohsiung finds itself in the right place at the right time to make the right moves on the MICE stage.

Kaohsiung has worked relentlessly to solidify its MICE reputation since hosting the World Games in 2009 followed by the Asia-Pacific Cities Summit (APCS) in 2013. Already a Taiwan manufacturing base, the city now actively promotes green industries such as tourism, cultural, creative, and technology, in addition to developing more capacities to attract MICE. In recent years, the completion of five major construction projects have transformed the city, giving it even more of a global competitive edge. These include the Kaohsiung Exhibition Center, a premier multi-purpose venue ideal for hybrid events; the Kaohsiung Public Library, regarded as the world's first column-suspended 'green' building; the Kaohsiung Port Terminal, a dramatic

multi-use facility housing both terminal and public facilities such as exhibition and event spaces; the Maritime Cultural & Popular Music Center, an ode to the city's rich maritime history; and the Light Rail Phase 1, which is the world's first light rail vehicle system on a fully catenary-free route—meaning no unsightly power wires hanging over the tracks!

UNIQUE VENUES

From conference venues to innovative and diverse spaces, Kaohsiung has many well-equipped event venues of international standard that specialize in providing enthusiastic and professional service. Apart from the city's star attraction, the Kaohsiung Exhibition Center, two of the most unique venues for one-of-a-kind experiences include the:

- ▶ **Wei-Wu-Ying Center for the Arts:** Inspired by the lush banyan trees in the Wei-Wu-Ying Park, this venue not only welcomes performance art residencies, it also serves as a public space where residents stroll, practice Tai Chi, and meditate.

- ▶ **Ten Drum Cultural Creation Park:** Located on the premises of the former Ciaotou Sugar Refinery, the village now stands as a century-old cultural heritage venue infused with the vitality of drum music, which is suitable for leisure, tourism, and off-campus teaching.

Backed by a booming hotel industry, Kaohsiung offers 400 hotels with 20,000 rooms with flexible meeting spaces for all event sizes. Some of the larger establishments include the H2O Hotel, the Hotel Indigo Kaohsiung Central Park, the Ambassador Hotel Kaohsiung, the Howard Plaza Hotel Kaohsiung and the 85 Sky Tower Hotel.

EVENTS TO WATCH OUT FOR

In 2016, Kaohsiung City Government held its own international conference, a Global Harbour Cities Forum, and successfully won the bid to host the 2020 International Convention Association (ICCA) annual conference. Other upcoming big-ticket events include the 2018 Global Harbour Cities Forum, 2018 IeSF International e-Sports Federation, Taiwan International Boat Show, and Taiwan International Fastener Show.

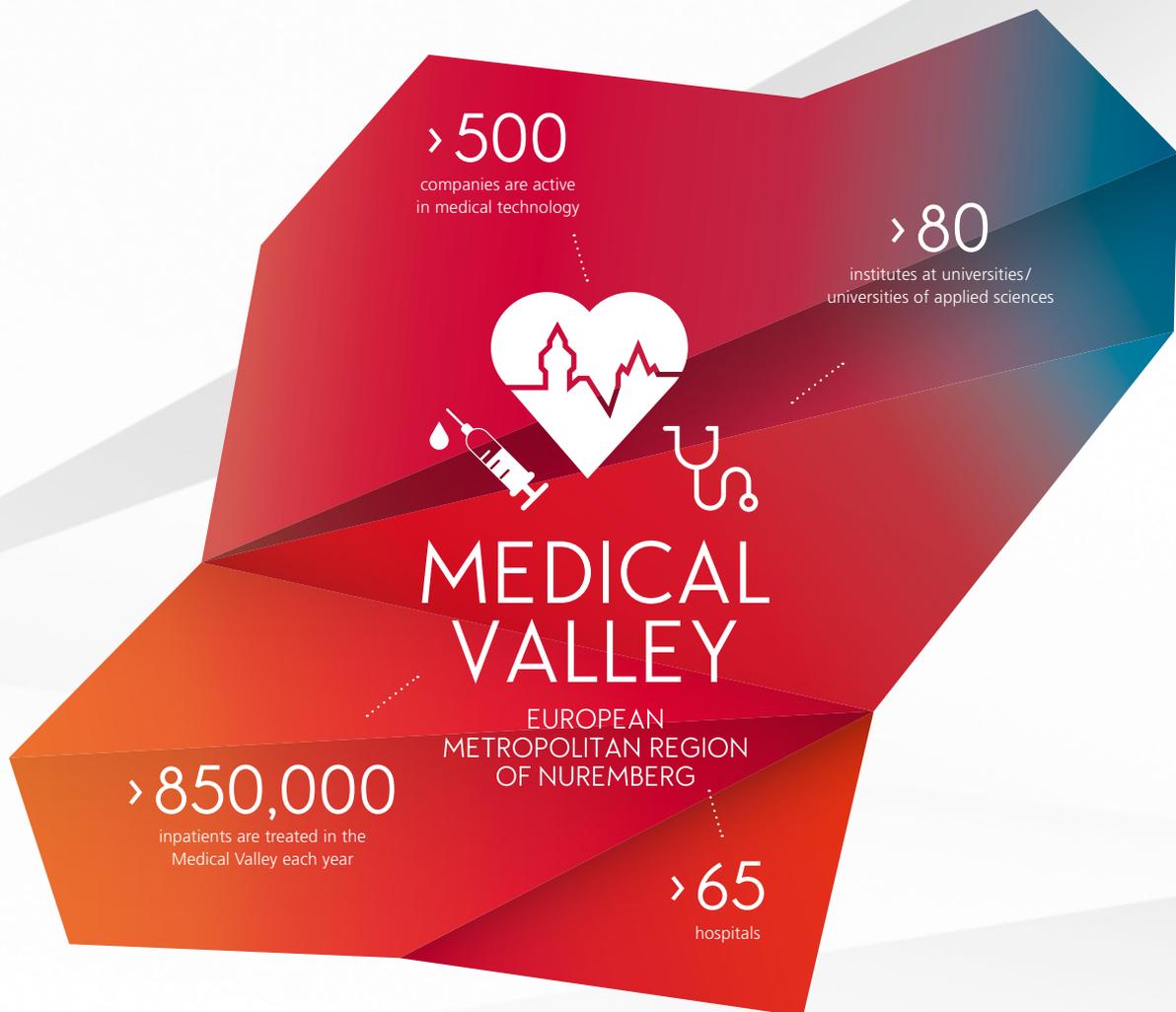


Taiwan's MICE Promotion Program (MEET TAIWAN)

Organized by Bureau of Foreign Trade, MOEA

Taiwan External Trade Development Council

Ad. by Bureau of Foreign Trade, MOEA



The diagnosis: Event fever

Did you know? Since 2010, the Metropolitan Region of Nuremberg has been home to the only leading-edge cluster for medical technology in Germany. Medical Valley, with partners such as Siemens Healthineers and Fraunhofer and a unique hospital and university landscape, was also named by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy a Digital Health Hub in 2017.

NürnbergConvention – at the cutting edge of the healthcare sector!

*Catch the fever too, and join us at IMEX in Frankfurt,
15–17 May 2018, at booth F150.*

nuernberg-convention.de

RENNES -CAPITAL OF BRITANNY A HUB OF EXCELLENCE

A new Convention Centre has just opened in Rennes, Brittany's capital in 2018: le Couvent des Jacobins. Just 90 mins from Paris and located in a historic 14th century building in the city centre, the Convention Centre offers a unique experience.

Combining heritage and modernity, this innovative building provides a wide range of modular spaces. Boasting two auditoriums (1,000 and 400 people) the Couvent des Jacobins also offers 4,000m² of exhibition space, 25 committee rooms around the historic building and its modern extension.

Its original architecture, unique in Europe, is a source of inspiration ensuring each event is unforgettable.

The large terrace with panoramic views, its Jardin du Cloître garden and its ambulatory are conducive to serenity between two working sessions. Fully private, these exceptional areas bring real added value to your business meeting, exhibition or cocktail party. The spaces in the Couvent des Jacobins are also equipped with the latest technology.

RENNES A HUB OF EXCELLENCE

Rennes is not just one of the best places to live, it is also one of the most innovative. French Tech certified, the Breton capital demonstrates ingenuity in a host of fields.

A pioneer in cutting-edge technology, its expertise expands to automotive industry, agri-food, sustainable development, new modes of transport, medicine and research. This is where research really takes shape, in fields ranging from digital technology, health, agri-food, the environment and automated production. Rennes is a true hub of excellence with four of Brittany's certified business clusters, with the Images et Réseaux cluster and Mer Bretagne cluster having international scope. The Valorial cluster focuses on foods for the future, and the ID4car cluster drives innovation in the automotive industry.

CYBERSECURITY: A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Historically naval territory, Brittany is one of the major players in national defence. Building on high-tech expertise, a network of over 500 companies and research centres operates around these greatly sensitive issues.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE CYBERDEFENCE CLUSTER

In the fight against cybercrime, Brittany is leading the race. There is a veritable network dedicated to research and development, but also to education and training that has developed in the region, earning it a centre of excellence status awarded by the French Ministry of Defence.

DESTINATION RENNES CONVENTION BUREAU

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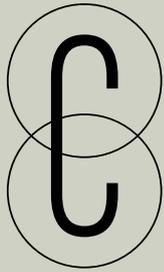
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ICCA PRESIDENT NINA FREYSEN- PRETORIUS ON **THE FUTURE OF MEETING INDUSTRY**

Nina Freysen-Pretorius, CEO of the Conference Company in South Africa, is now serving her second term as President of International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA). She shared her thoughts on learning, gender equality and the future of meeting industry. Text by Vikas Tembhare

How important is knowledge and learning to you?

Knowledge is information or a skill gained through experience or education, awareness gained by experience of a fact or situation, according to the definition in the Oxford dictionary. Learning, on the other hand, is the ability, openness and preparedness to acquire a new skill set or way to do something. I think that learning is much more challenging as it potentially means that we have to change something that we have done in a certain way. This is often uncomfortable and unpleasant - but ultimately always necessary.

Is there a 'revolution' in the world of association meetings?

The word "revolution" conjures up so many negative connotations to me in light of all the political unrest and change, displacement of people and escalating environmental challenges. But if one has to use this word, I believe that it is used to address the establishment of associations that are not-for-profit entities representing like-minded professionals. Associations and the meetings that they host have the ability to bring about positive change and provide the necessary support by means of lobbying, knowledge sharing and education to deal with the many challenges we are experiencing.

What is the priority of the meeting industry in the future?

Different associations and its members have to become much more vocal to ensure we remain on the right path as a collective. Also, they should use all means available to them to get these messages out to the members and the general public, social media makes it more doable than ever before - therefore there should be no excuses!

How important is gender equality in the meeting industry?

The meeting industry continues to be very inclusive with the employment of both sexes, compared to other industries. But the matter of equal pay and opportunities has to be raised and dealt with. Iceland becoming the first country in the world to ensure equal pay for men and women really sets the right tone and I hope that other countries and organisations will follow.



10 QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS WITH NINA

1. What is present?

Mobile apps, day visitors for meeting, connectivity

2. What is the future?

Exciting changes in technology

3. How to support the industry?

Believing in humanity

4. Statement for work-life balance?

Less is more

5. Choice or chance?

Choice

6. Speak or listen?

Listen

7. Human or technology?

Both

8. Print or digital?

Print

9. Favourite social media platform?

Whatsapp

10. Favourite industry to start associations in?

Mentoring, gender equality





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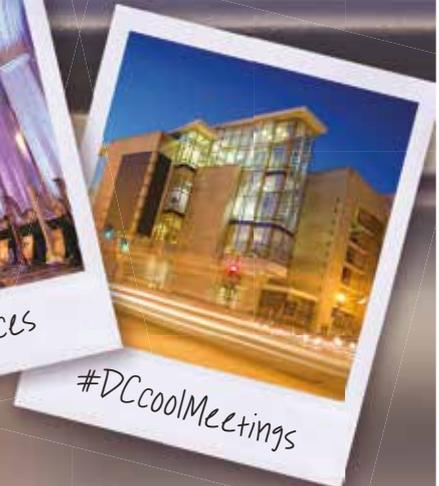
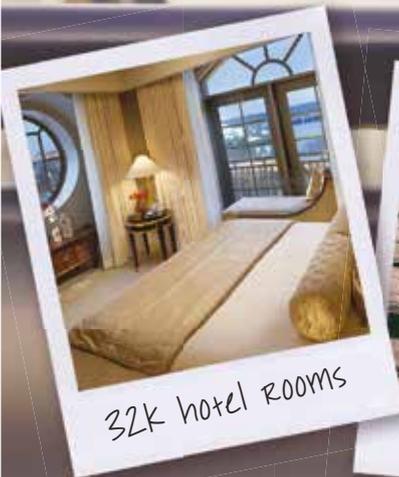
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