



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

Headquarters

JUNE 2016

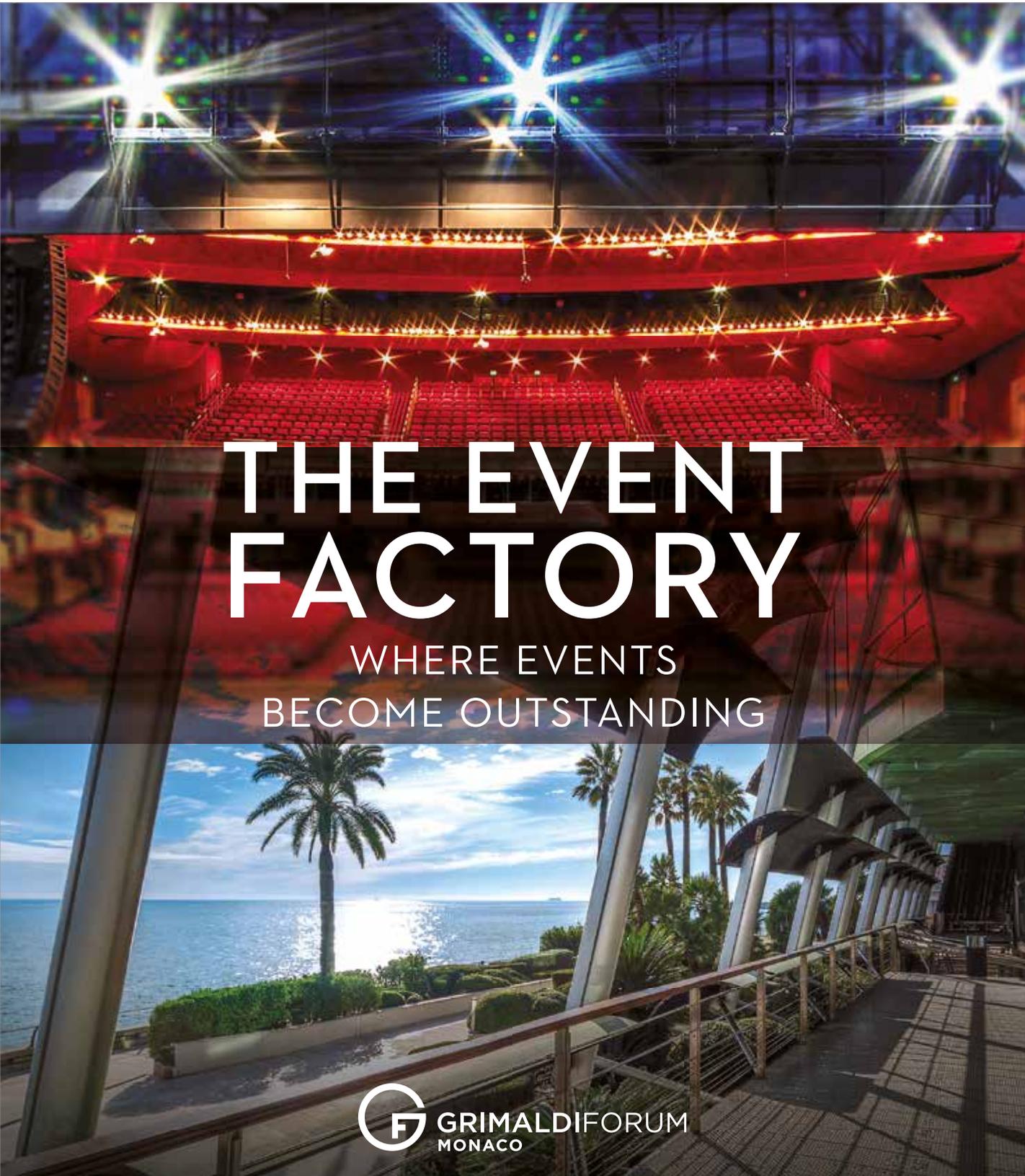


Special Supplement

SYDNEY
ON THE EDGE OF
TOMORROW

**HOW TO WORK
BETTER WITH
DESTINATIONS**





THE EVENT FACTORY

WHERE EVENTS
BECOME OUTSTANDING

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MONACO & NICE

COUNT ON THEM WHEN MEETING IN FRANCE

Situated between the French and Italian Rivas, Monaco is an easily accessible, surprisingly affordable destination, offering both glamour and knowledge to the most demanding association planners. Dipping its feet into the sparkling blue Mediterranean, Nice is shimmeringly pretty and full major museums and Roman ruins, wonderful hilltop vistas and upscale resorts.

MONACO

AN OBVIOUS BUSINESS DESTINATION

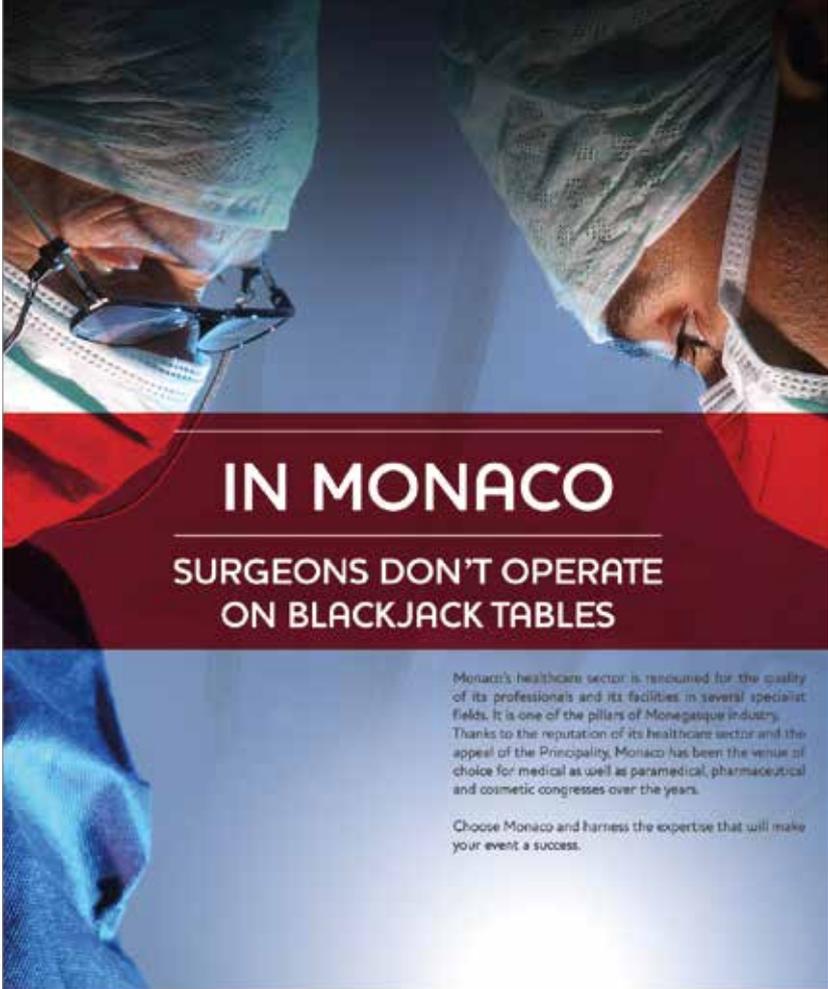
Nestled in the heart of Europe, less than two hours by air from all major European cities and situated near the Nice Côte d'Azur International Airport, Monaco, in addition to being easily accessible, is an obvious business destination. But the Principality's assets are not just geographical, and its other advantages are less well known.

Monaco has excellent hotel facilities, which offer altogether 2,500 rooms, with a real tradition of welcome. It also boasts a modern, eco-certified congress centre, Grimaldi Forum Monaco, which is internationally recognised by the profession and meeting planners alike.

Monaco is a hard working "city-nation" and a highly diversified economic platform. The leading business sectors in the Principality are healthcare, banking and finance, high tech, tourism, international trade, shipping and real estate. ▷

500

THE NUMBER OF
BUSINESS EVENTS THIS
YEAR IN MONACO



IN MONACO

SURGEONS DON'T OPERATE ON BLACKJACK TABLES

Monaco's healthcare sector is renowned for the quality of its professionals and its facilities in several specialist fields. It is one of the pillars of Monegasque industry. Thanks to the reputation of its healthcare sector and the appeal of the Principality, Monaco has been the venue of choice for medical as well as paramedical, pharmaceutical and cosmetic congresses over the years.

Choose Monaco and harness the expertise that will make your event a success.

monaco.
Convention Bureau

YOUR EVENT NEEDS MONACO
www.visitmonaco.com



With a calendar of more than 500 business events, including numerous association congresses, Monaco is strengthening its position as a destination for events. Prices are reasonable in this safe state, the climate is sunny even in winter and the Principality's image is strong and dynamic.

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NEW WEBSITE:
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Grimaldi Forum Monaco

NICE

AN ACTIVE MODERN CAPITAL

The 5th largest city in France, Nice is an active modern capital that has preserved its art of living over the centuries. This authentic city finds its energy in the sea and from the mountains around Baie des Anges, cultivating its modernity and dynamism with a policy of constantly improved services.

With luxury hotels in Baroque or Belle-Epoque style, fine ultra-designer hotels, artists' rooms, hotels with Mediterranean atmosphere, Nice boasts more than 30 properties offering the finest seminar rooms, providing a very pleasant setting for fruitful meetings and comfortable stays. The majority of hotels for delegates can be reached quickly by tram, with services running from the Place Masséna to the Acropolis.

Nice is close to Sophia-Antipolis Technology Park, a leading centre of scientific and medical research.

5TH THE PLACE OF NICE IN FRANCE IN TERMS OF SIZE

In the heart of the city, the Acropolis Congress Centre is located 15 minutes from Nice Côte d'Azur International Airport. The main train station has been preserved in its original condition and is served by high-speed trains link up with Europe's main cities. The predominance of nature serves as the foundation for a new green policy, and becoming a benchmark for ecology among Mediterranean 'green cities' is a priority for Nice. 



© A.ISSOCK





NICE EXCELLENCE — NATURALLY —

In recent years Nice has been enjoying a genuine economic and architectural revolution. Creative, dynamic, young, Nice is bubbling with innovative creations worthy of Europe's greatest capitals.

ASSOCIATE NICE WITH YOUR CONGRESS

- ⇒ An international airport connected to more than 100 cities, just 15mn from the city centre
- ⇒ Adequate accommodation capacity, 200 hotels and residences, 10,000 rooms (80% in 4* & 3* category)
- ⇒ A 38,000 Sqm modular convention centre, Nice-Acropolis in the heart of the city and certified ISO 14001
- ⇒ A hub of internationally-recognized healthcare facilities: 9 hospitals, 26 clinics, 7 specialist centers, an ICT expertise in the service of e-health
- ⇒ An Ambassador's programme in the Scientific and Medical field
- ⇒ A region dedicated to research and innovation: 130 labs, 2,700 researchers
- ⇒ Your meeting goes green in Nice : 2nd Tramway line in progress, public rented electric cars, public rented bikes
- ⇒ An international destination with an exceptional microclimate

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE!

In January 2016, UCA (University Côte d'Azur) has been awarded by an international jury the IDEX label «Excellence Initiative» and Nice is the 1st ranking French University in the field of life science and health.

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THE BELFAST WAY

The warmest of welcomes, unique and intriguing attractions and now a world-class conference venue await business travellers in Northern Ireland's capital city. Thanks to a significant investment programme, Belfast has developed as a highly desirable destination for all types of meetings, conferences and events. When event planners choose Belfast, the city promises that all its service providers - all 333,000 of them - will be ready to make sure each business visitor experiences the Belfast way.

A CITY AT YOUR SERVICE

Team Belfast, comprising Tourism Northern Ireland, Visit Belfast and Belfast Waterfront has its eyes firmly on the prize of becoming a world leading business tourism destination.

Key to achieving this goal is its one city, one team strategy. Behind the scenes, key service providers are working hand in hand to create a unique and memorable experience citywide. From taxi drivers to bartenders, all ready to give the famous Belfast welcome. They will be on hand to deliver bespoke social programmes for delegates seeking to experience the city riches as well as the enchanting beauty of Northern Ireland. Its landscapes are home to HBO's blockbuster *Game of Thrones*, from the spectacular Mountains of Mourne to the legendary UNESCO protected Giants Causeway.

This approach is already helping the city win industry accolades as well as turn clients into advocates.

Indeed at the city's most recent major conference, the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (ASGBI) hailed Belfast as the friendliest host city at its annual International Surgical Congress held in the newly extended Belfast Waterfront last month.

Bhavnita Patel, General Manager at ASGBI thanked the city for its warm reception: *"The city has been extremely helpful and welcoming. I have been organising events for thirteen years, and I found Belfast to be the friendliest host city. There is a real buzz - everyone knew about our conference and joined in to ensure that we, and our members, had a truly memorable experience."*

ASGBI are not alone in acknowledging the city's friendliness, this has been cited by other customers and research studies. Dr Ed Fitzgerald, Conference Director and Past President of the Association of Surgeons in Training explains: *"I can say without hesitation Belfast's friendliness, excellent support, value for money, location and conference facilities make it stand out as the perfect business tourism destination."*

Furthermore, research for fDi's Global Cities of the Future 2014/15 named Belfast as:

- the world's top business friendly city in the small to medium category, and
- one of the world's top 10 cities for Business Friendliness of any size.



New Belfast Waterfront



NEW WORLD CLASS CONFERENCE CENTRE

Just a 10-minute drive from George Best Belfast Airport visitors can reach the beating of heart of this vibrant city and the new Belfast Waterfront conference facility.

Re-opened last month, this 7,000m² world-class conference centre can deliver a brand-new event experience for up to 5,000 delegates.

Expanding the city's highly reputable and only purpose-built conference centre will help cement Belfast's position as a must-visit business tourism destination. It is a real game-changer for the city – as the venue is now able to accommodate larger events with a wider variety of requirements.

Jennifer Crawley-Patterson, Sales Manager at Belfast Waterfront comments: *"Our 7,000m² state-of-the-art conference venue has enabled us and the city to facilitate the return of many large scale events. Interest in the new facility has been extremely positive and we are already seeing the dividends with an increase in major national and international bookings. Now with double our event space, an innovative catering approach and advanced event technology at our fingertips, we're able to compete against the best-in-class across UK and Europe and are ready to welcome many more prestigious conferences."*

And many more big names are on their way to the stunning riverside venue including BBC Good Food Show, the World Credit Union Conference and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Annual Congress, to name just a few.

Belfast Waterfront's stylish and flexible spaces create the perfect meeting place for delegates to learn, share and celebrate.

Visitors will enjoy brand new conference facilities with stunning riverside views as well as good old-fashioned service and courtesy.

Bhavnita Patel added: *"The integration between the new and existing facility is seamless and the entire venue is fantastic. Feedback from delegates has been extremely positive, in particular the friendliness and helpfulness of the front of house team. Staff went to great lengths to ensure delegates had everything that they needed."*

"Our members also remarked on the stunning views. The venue's design cleverly brings the outside into the building. Whatever floor you're on, you can enjoy beautiful views and plenty of natural light. At registration, during lunchtime and even when picking up their luggage, delegates enjoyed stunning views across the River Lagan."

7,000M²

THE SPACE AVAILABLE AT THE NEW BELFAST WATERFRONT

ACCESS FOR ALL

Belfast's good news keeps getting better. More flight routes have been announced for this dynamic city. With 158 European and international destinations servicing both Belfast and Dublin and 26 direct UK flights into Belfast, the city is easily accessible for international business travellers.

It's time to visit Belfast and discover the Belfast way. 

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE CITY'S EXCITING OFFERING AND NEW CONFERENCE FACILITY, CONTACT BELFAST WATERFRONT TEAM ON +44 (0)28 9033 4400, EMAIL CONFERENCE@WATERFRONT.CO.UK OR VISIT WWW.WATERFRONT.CO.UK TWITTER: [@BELWATERFRONT](https://twitter.com/BELWATERFRONT) #BELFASTWATERFRONT



THERE'S NOTHING LIKE AUSTRALIA

Australia is a place where big landscapes inspire big thinking. Where innovation and a can-do attitude filter through all walks of life, from event delivery to medical breakthroughs.

Already over a billion people around the world rely on Australian discoveries including Spray on Skin, the Cervical Cancer Vaccine, Ultrasound, high speed Wi-Fi and the Bionic Ear. And this is only going to increase, as innovative Australians across a number of knowledge sectors including professional services, advanced manufacturing, food & agriculture, resources & energy, and health & science, develop new cutting edge technology such as the bionic spinal cord. Australia's innovative people, and the skills and expertise they hold, are one of the key reasons so many associations are choosing the destination for their events.

Australia is also making sure that infrastructure keeps developing in order to meet current and future demand. Multimillion dollar investment is currently transforming the country, with thousands of new hotel rooms coming on line, as well as new and redeveloped event spaces and convention centres expanding the country's offering and appeal. Some of the key developments currently underway are the AUD\$1 billion development of the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney), scheduled to open December 2016, and the redevelopment of Darling Harbour, the area surrounding ICC Sydney.

Beyond new infrastructure and its people, Australia continues to be a highly desirable destination for business events globally, ranking either first or second, as a place offering an exceptional combination of world-class beauty and natural environments, outstanding business events facilities, quality ac-

commodation, exclusive experiences and local cuisine and wine.

Business events visitors can taste the depth and breadth of Australian cuisine first-hand at venues across the country – from the globally renowned restaurants to outback country pubs – and importantly, at convention and exhibition centres whilst at their conference. Australia's approach to food and wine respects tradition, whilst seeking to challenge it. The result is produce driven, fresh and innovative cuisine paired beautifully with wines that regularly gather accolades and devotees.

With Australia's proven track record of successfully delivering events, producing innovative people, and reputation as a place with world-class research facilities and universities, it's no wonder that the appetite for Australia as a leading business events destination continues to grow, attracting large-scale conventions including the 2018 World Congress of Accountants and the 2021 FIGO World Congress of Gynecology and Obstetrics.

Find out for yourself why there is nothing like Australia for your next conference. 

Australia is making sure that infrastructure keeps developing in order to meet current and future demand. Multimillion dollar investment is currently transforming the country.

LEVERAGE AUSTRALIA'S OFFERING FOR YOUR NEXT CONFERENCE*

- In a ranking of the world's top 200 universities by five key subject fields, Australia was the fifth highest ranked country overall, with particularly strong performances in Life and Agriculture Sciences, Engineering/Technology and Computer Sciences.
- Australia's CSIRO ranks in the top 1% of the world's scientific institutions in 15 research fields.
- According to the Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2015-16, Australia ranks in the world's top 20 for the talent of the people it produces, attracts and retains. Australia is ranked 13th out of 109 countries.
- Australia is a hub for Asia-Pacific due to its close proximity and longstanding trade, investment and cultural ties with the region.

*Source - Austrade.gov.au



Melbourne



Lone Pine Sanctuary, Brisbane



Uluru



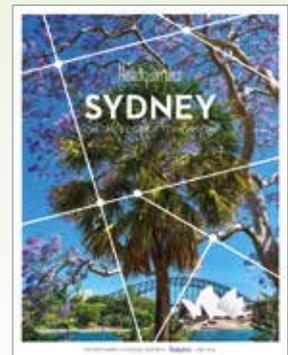
Sydney



WITH THIS ISSUE ONLY!

Read all about Sydney in our Special Destination Supplement

Managing Director Rémi Dévé travelled to Sydney earlier this year and reports on the rejuvenation of the buzzing Australian metropolis. Sydney is indeed designing its future, with a constant focus on innovation and major infrastructure developments underway, starting with the brand-new International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) opening in December – giving association planners all the more reason to consider meeting in Sydney.



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HOW A TRADE SHOW BECOMES A MASTERCLASS

MARCEL A.M. VISSERS EDITOR IN CHIEF

When I was a little boy I was often asked: *"What did you learn today, Marcel?"*. My many travels have taught me that for our business traveling is the best university. Nothing beats going away. Observing, touching and feeling. It's a great way to find time to listen, read, talk or becoming otherwise involved in knowledge and experience gathering.

Today a lot of time is invested in visiting trade shows and attending congresses. When I visit a fair, I always get this special feeling as a result of being suddenly exposed to so many impressions, colours, smells... It's like being dropped into an ants colony and to have to suddenly pay attention to what to Mr & Mrs Ant are saying.

But the session that I miss most is the IMEX Politician Forum. Is it worth going? You bet! Last year I was fortunate enough to discover in person how important the commitment of policymakers is in shaping a meetings industry. But I wish the Politician Forum would pay a little more attention to those destinations that are still in the process of searching for their soul. The fact that the first East Africa meetings show became a reality is, for instance, the achievement of one man, Mr. Kumneger, who understood that without the help of government not much would happen.

Other sessions that always catch my attention are those that deal with 'Trends'. But who determines what is a trend exactly? Take IMEX Team's 'Idea # 6' for instance: it states that Asia is potentially the key growth area for meetings. I've been hearing that this is a trend for the past ten years. So, in the end, I don't tend to believe all that is being said because it turns out that most of the time it's just a bunch of words about 'doing business'. And there is more to the meetings industry than only growth and more growth.

Another subject that always appeals to me is the 'big news' on the trade show floor. There is no doubt that this year the trophy goes to the Memorandum of the first European Convention Bureau group, an alliance that I think has much in store for the years ahead. If I get a chance I will definitely try to delve deeper into this as I believe their initiative is proof of their capacity to act with foresight, relying on market research as the foundation for future development.

MORE STORIES ON WWW.MEETINGMEDIAGROUP.COM

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1

INTRODUCING CHENGDU

The provincial capital of the Sichuan province in Southwest China, Chengdu is one of the most important economic, financial, commercial, cultural, transportation, and communication centres in Western China. The fertile plain, on which Chengdu is located, is also known as the "Country of Heaven" and the giant panda, a Chinese national treasure and one of the rarest animals in the world, also lives in the Sichuan province. Known as "China's Famous Exhibition City", Chengdu is taking the lead in the convention economy, having become one of the five largest convention and exhibition cities in China. Numerous companies have invested in Chengdu such as UK-based Reed Exhibitions, as well as domestic companies such as the Chinese European Art Center, Sanlian Exhibition, and Eastpo International Expo.

WWW.CBE.GOV.CN

4

HANGZHOU GEARS UP TO HOST 2016 G20 SUMMIT

It has been more than a decade since the government of Hangzhou set the goal of turning the Zhejiang Province capital into an international meetings hub. With the news of G20 combined with the announcement that Hangzhou will host the 2022 Asian Games, the city is poised to take its place on the world stage. The G20 is the main forum for global economic and financial cooperation that brings together the world's most advanced and emerging economies, representing around 85 percent of global GDP, 80 percent of world trade, and two-thirds of the world population. The local government named 2015 as the "international convention year" for Hangzhou, by strengthening the connection between the city and international agencies to bring in more high-end international conventions before and after the Summit, aligned with the city's goal to establish itself as an international conference destination.

WWW.MICEHANGZHOU.COM/EN

2

THREE KEY DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE GLOBAL ASSOCIATION HUBS PARTNERSHIP

Following the launch of the Global Association Hub Partnership (GAHP) in October 2015, the partners – Destination DC, Dubai Association Centre, Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau™ and visit.brussels – have announced three key developments to support their plans to help associations grow and expand internationally: the appointment of former head of Brussels Convention Bureau Hervé Bosquet as GAHP's Senior Advisor; the introduction of a host of dialogue platforms with senior executives of associations; and the launch of a dedicated website to provide associations with information on GAHP and benefits provided by the partners.

WWW.ASSOCIATIONHUBS.ORG

5

WARSAW, A GLOBAL CITY

In 2012 the Economist Intelligence Unit ranked Warsaw, the capital and largest city of Poland, as the 32nd most liveable city in the world. It was also ranked as one of the most livable cities in Central Europe. Today Warsaw, historically at the crossroads between the Western and Eastern Europe, is considered a global "alpha" city, a major international tourist destination and a significant cultural, political and economic hub. Whether you come to Warsaw on a business trip, for a conference, or as a tourist, Warsaw has everything that a modern European capital has to offer: a dynamic and stable business environment, historic and modern meeting facilities, vibrant cultural life and green space covering a quarter of the city.

WWW.WARSAWCONVENTION.PL

3

PARIS, STILL A LEADING DESTINATION FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Once again this year, Paris proved that it still has a commanding presence on the global conferences market. With 186 events organised by international associations in 2015, Paris took second place in the ICCA rankings. In addition, Paris hosted a total of 1,004 conferences with more than 700,000 attendees, a 9% increase over 2014. Overall, Paris remains a highly attractive city capable of hosting successful events. Viparis played a part in this success, as its venues played host to a number of these events. During the year, it welcomed a number of large-scale gatherings, including the World Gas Conference, the European Wind Energy Association Conference and Euro PCR. The 21st Climate Change Conference, known as COP21, was a historic event that took place at Paris le Bourget, a Viparis site.

WWW.VIPARIS.COM

6

LIMA TOPS RANKING FOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS IN THE REGION

Lima maintains its leading position as the most popular venue for international meetings in the Americas, according to the ICCA 2015 rankings. In 2015, Peru's capital city experienced a 28% rise from last year in the organisation of events (82) and the Andean country is placed 39th in the ranking of countries, posting a 25% growth. "*Lima and Peru have moved up several spots; this reflects the good strategy that is promoting Peru as a favorite destination where meetings can take place in the region,*" Foreign Trade and Tourism Minister Magali Silva noted. Even though Lima ranks first in the 2015 ranking of cities in the Americas along with Buenos Aires, it is the absolute leader by number of attendees. 2014 attracted 28,477 participants, whereas 2015 drew 52,868, that is, the number grew by 86%.

WWW.LIMACONVENTION.COM



S A V E T H E D A T E



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

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EFMA

THRIVING IN A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING DIGITALIZED WORLD

Efma promotes innovation in retail finance by fostering debate and discussion among peers supported by a robust array of information services and numerous opportunities for direct encounters. Karine Coutinho, Deputy Managing Director, explains how the organisation operates. Interview Rémi Dévé



**KARINE
COUTINHO**

Can you describe the challenges you've had to face over the last few years?

As an association, Efma needs to strive hard to survive in a constantly evolving digitalised world. Competitions from smaller but innovative players specialised in niche services that are also provided -by our association is something that is sometimes not easy to manage.

I would say that in today's context, the challenges associations have had to face is threefold:

- **Digitalisation:** many associations have heavy IT legacy and are not using 360° CRM tools enabling them to better know their members and properly engage with them. The lack of agility towards the adoption of new technologies and innovative tools is one of the reasons why associations are sometimes failing to be in line with members expectations. We need to bear in mind that our members are also "customers" and that most of the time, their experience when buying a product or reading content online is set by the Facebook's,

Amazon's, Apple's of this world. Associations need to go this route if they want to survive. As an association whose mission is to help its members in their digital transformation, Efma needs to set the standards and create innovative digital tools to meet the expectations of its membership base.

- **Internationalisation:** After the 2008 financial crisis, Efma suffered a harsh decline as many financial institutions left the association. As we used to be a European-centric association until 2008, we had no choice but to expand to new geographies. The hardest part when going global is obviously the cultural discrepancies in terms of membership services consumption. While in some geographies, members are favoring networking opportunities and events, in other ones, they prefer to get access to online portals and reports. Besides, these preferences can vary from one member to another making it hard for local relationship managers to set up standard approached and service packages. Addressing the needs of remote members and retain them is a key challenge today. ▷

Could you please present Efma?

Efma is a global non-profit organisation, established in 1971 by banks and insurance companies. It facilitates networking between decision-makers. It provides quality insights to help banks and insurance companies make the right decisions to foster innovation and drive their transformation. Over 3,300 brands in 130 countries are Efma members. We are headquartered in Paris and have offices in London, Brussels, Barcelona, Stockholm, Bratislava, Dubai, Mumbai and Singapore.



We are organising more and more event in Asia, Middle East and Africa to make sure our local members have forums to meet and network.



- **Planification:** One could think that strategy is something for big companies. Nevertheless, it's important to set up a vision and ambition, not only to engage members in the long term, but also to engage the association employees into a roadmap and make sure they are committed to deliver the services/initiatives that will be launched in the future. Happy and committed employees make for happy and committed members.

We see Efma organises many different kinds of events - can you tell us more about those?

Indeed, Efma organises many types of event from conferences and summits gathering hundreds of participants to more VIP, exclusive and smaller events targeting C-level executives (councils and clubs).

Five years ago, we also launched webinars and online think tanks that are much more content oriented but giving less space to "live" networking. Nevertheless, we find this type of event valuable to reach remote members with travelling restrictions, they can still enjoy our services from the comfort of their desk but again, it is harder to truly engage them in the community. More recently, we started to live broadcast one of our awards ceremony, allowing us to reach new prospects and evangelise them with Efma's value proposition.

Last but not least, we also organise business trips - these are exclusive events where senior executives meet for high level debates and interaction in different countries. During an entire week, participants are immersed into the culture of the country via tour guides, gastronomy and meetings with their local



homologues. Being a small group makes it easy for them to create bounds and opportunities throughout this unique adventure.

What is the decision process behind the selection of a destination/venue?

Destination attractiveness is one of the key elements to make an event successful. Nice locations, with good flight connections and favorable weather are definitely strong arguments when a participant decides to attend an event or not. Apart from this, as every association, we have budget restrictions. To make sure the event is profitable at the end of the day, we are favoring affordable but attractive locations like Spain or Italy. Of course, we are not against organising event in new locations or make effort in terms of budget if we feel that the



potential in terms of participation is high. London being the biggest Fintech hub in Europe, we for example organised our 2016 Distribution Summit and Fintech awards ceremony in this city, even if costs were quite high. At the end of the day, we were very satisfied with the participation rate and geographical spread of attendees.

We also choose locations according to our global expansion strategy. We are organising more and more event in Asia, Middle East and Africa to make sure our local members have forums to meet and network.

We understand you're looking to relocate your Karachi office and expand your services. Can you tell us more about that?

Dubai being a hub between Africa, Europe and Asia, we are thinking about relocating our Karachi office in the UAE. Prior to that, we decided to open a chapter in Pakistan in order to set up our back office and database activity there, mainly for cost reasons.

Now, we think that having an office in Dubai will enable us to penetrate the African market more easily as we cannot devote budget to opening one specifically in Africa at the moment. This is a strategic choice we made. Besides, Dubai offers attractive conditions for any association trying to

set up an office in the Middle East thank to the Dubai Association Centre. We are currently exploring this opportunity.

Can you share your insights about the latest trends in the association community?

I recently had the opportunity to meet with peers from other associations during an event in Dubai and I really felt we have the same concerns on top of our agendas: How to innovate when you are an association? How to embrace new technological trends? How to retain your members? How to grow global with limited resources? These are the key questions keeping association execs awake at night.

There's a lot going on in the association's community, mainly regarding event trends (digitisation of events, increased interactivity and social events) and virtualisation of the relationship with our members thanks to virtual events, training, digital platforms and apps. Today, for an association to remain relevant to its members, it needs to accompany them anytime, anywhere and I believe this is possible thanks to the capacity associations will have to integrate digital in their overall strategy and mission. ⁴⁰

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EXPO 2017 ASTANA “FUTURE ENERGY” – THE CONFIDENCE OF YOUTH

In this second article of our World Expo series, Matteo Pederzoli puts Astana on the map and wonders how associations, like the ones you, our dear readers, represent, are planning to get involved in the 2017 Expo. There seems to be a lot of ways to do so.

Imagine a city that was founded just 19 years ago in the middle of the steppe, after having been master-planned by Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa. With a skyline punctuated by Norman Foster-designed buildings and glowing towers, Astana, which in Kazakh language means “the capital”, has been quickly and ambitiously rising as Central Asia’s new hub for renewable energy and finance. Whereas the overall Expo theme is aimed to concentrate on innovative, practical energy solutions to ensure safe and sustainable access to energy for all while reducing CO₂ emissions, and on their global impact, the 25-hectare Expo site will become the location of a regional financial centre after the three-month-long event, taking place from 10 June to 10 September of next year.

The Vision of “Future Energy” is to highlight solutions and paths that ensure sustainable energy management. These pathways are aimed at combating climate change and reducing CO₂ emissions; promoting energy alternatives – renewable energy in particular – and driving energy efficiency programmes; ensuring energy security; managing energy production, storage and use; and guaranteeing universal access to sustainable energy. The Mission of “Future Energy” is to appeal to the international community’s sense of responsibility by way of institutions, organisations,



The Vision of “Future Energy” is to highlight solutions and paths that ensure sustainable energy management.

corporations, and individuals, with the aim of generating debate and awareness regarding the decisive impact that energy management has on the lives of people and that of the planet.

Expo Astana 2017 “Future Energy” has been conceived as an extensive, integral project that addresses the topic of energy from several social, cultural and environmental perspectives, allowing for it to be studied as a determining factor in how societies and everyday life function. And guiding the five million target visitors – 15% of whom are expected to benefit from the ad-hoc visa waiver programme, and to travel to Kazakhstan mainly from CIS, China and Europe – through their essential, active role in the design and execution of a plan for energy efficient production and use.

Infrastructure development is proceeding at full speed both within the city and on the Expo site, as the country gets ready to become the first former Soviet Republic to host a World Specialised Exhibition. Twenty-four new hotels are being built to accommo-

date 35,000 tourists/day. 6,813 events are planned during the Expo trimester, inclusive of B2B and B2C tracks, and ranging from a global summit on “Energy Finances” organised by Bloomberg to a custom Cirque du Soleil show production.

As the Expo site re-emerged from the freezing winter (but the average summer daily temperature is 25C!), construction is hastening to deliver the “shell and core” by 1 November 2016 (two months ahead of the original schedule and before the snow covers it again!) so that fitting out of the site and installations may begin before the New Year’s Holiday Season “winter wonderland” lethargy. The site has a convenient access to Astana’s city centre, the international airport and the railway station.

By May, 87 countries (against a target of 100) and 15 international organisations had confirmed participation in next year’s world’s top event for the energy sector. Amongst the global corporate players planning to exhibit are Shell, Saint-Gobain, Cisco, Samsung, ExxonMobil, Eni and Total. Amongst the

confirmed international organisations associations could partner with are the Energy Charter, the European Commission, the International Atomic Energy Agency, IRENA (International Renewable Energy Agency), OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), SE4ALL – Sustainable Energy 4 All, UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNESCO (United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture), UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organisation) and The World Bank. How’s your association planning to get involved? And to contribute to Astana’s twentieth birthday’s celebrations?!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE
EXPO 2017 SEE
[HTTPS://EXPO2017ASTANA.COM](https://EXPO2017ASTANA.COM).

This article is a contribution by MCI Special Projects Director Matteo Pederzoli, who served as Executive Producer and Curator of the Expo Milano 2015 European Union Pavilion Visitor Experience. An ad hoc consortium led by the MCI team helped the European Commission, Council, and Parliament, as well as the participating EU Member States (19 of 28) conceptualise, design, produce, install, market, operate and dismantle the show titled “The Golden Ear – The Story of Alex and Sylvia.”

THREE WAYS CONVENTION BUREAUX CAN VALUE-ADD TO MEETING EXPERIENCES

More than two-thirds of the associations surveyed in 2015 by the UIA were not aware or did not use services provided by convention and visitor bureaux (CVBs). Clearly, CVBs need to increase their efforts in engaging associations. More importantly, they need to increase understanding of what CVBs can do, especially how associations can tap on CVBs as a valuable resource when planning events. Jeannie Lim writes



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BUREAU

CVBs can generally support association meeting planners in many ways. But there are three main areas in which CVBs can further value-add to the business experience and outcomes that both event owners and visitors can find truly beneficial.

1. BOOSTING ON-GROUND ASSOCIATION NETWORKS THROUGH CVBS

For international associations looking for new event destinations, CVBs can help identify local association members to serve as on-ground contacts and partners to support their events.

For example, the Conference Ambassador Programme by the Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau (SECB) comprises notable professionals and key opinion leaders. Drawn from fields such as healthcare, education and engineering, these ambassadors contribute insights and expertise, and offer a wealth of information on Singapore as a destination for business events. They also help generate opportunities for international associations to learn from and network with other industry leaders. One such ambassador is Professor Lee Yuan Kun, elected president of the International Union of Microbiological

Sciences (IUMS) who worked with SECB to secure the bid to host the IUMS 2017 congress in Singapore.

SECB also continually engages international associations through tradeshows, roadshows, familiarization trips for association partners and in-market MICE specialists in our regional offices. In Singapore, the Bureau regularly meets both local associations and international organisations with a regional presence in Singapore to discuss hosting of meetings and events in Singapore.

In addition, with Singapore being part of the newly formed Global Association Hubs Partnership (GAHP) along with Dubai Association Centre, Destination DC, and visit.brussels, international associations can leverage our strength as a regional node to support their growth in Asia. The GAHP aims to drive the growth of international associations by helping them expand their reach and presence globally, on top of supporting them in building their capabilities.

2. WORKING WITH CVBS TO GROW ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Having selected the venue, international associations can look towards CVBs for further support to enhance

Having selected the venue, international associations can look towards CVBs for further support to enhance their events. They can also work with them to build legacies as part of event-hosting.



their events. SECB has an overview of the business events landscape in Singapore, and where relevant, can assist to facilitate synergies and collaboration between relevant business events. One example is how SECB has sought to attract and cluster related business events around flagship shows to complement Singapore's key economic industries. This ensures targeted focus on the right audience, and quality content that best caters to the needs of our business travellers. This approach has worked well as it allows time-strapped delegates to optimise their business trips and maximise opportunities across the different events.

International associations could also take advantage of assistance schemes from CVBs to help defray costs and streamline processes when organising their events. For those looking to host business events in Singapore, SECB provides incentives to support association planners. Funding support is available through the Business Events in Singapore (BEIS) scheme, which helps organisers to enhance their marketing and attendance building initiatives and create greater impact on their events and visitors' experience. The Singapore MICE Advantage Programme (SMAP), conceptualised in partnership with

Singapore Airlines and Changi Airport Group, further provides greater value such as savings on air tickets and enhanced event planning and delegate experiences, among other benefits.

To provide event organisers with a more seamless business planning experience, SECB also offers customized support that may include facilitation in securing venues, introductions with leading government agencies, local associations and business partners, and marketing and publicity support.

3. BUILDING A LEGACY WITH CVBS

Last but not least, international associations can work with CVBs to build legacies as part of event-hosting.

As a member of the BestCities Global Alliance, Singapore is able to tap into a continuing conversation about global best practices in association meetings and adapt to meet the evolving needs of international meeting planners.

Conversely, meeting planners can leverage the knowledge and contacts of our partner networks, such as BestCities, to create and sustain legacies for their events. The World Confederation of Physical Therapy (WCPT) is one such example. It held its international physical therapy congress in Singapore for the first time in 2015, providing the momentum for the Singapore Physiotherapy Association to further promote the profession in Singapore through these new initiatives – the formalisation a Bachelor of Science with Honours programme in physiotherapy, and the institution of the Specialist Physiotherapy Accreditation Board for local physiotherapists.

By partnering with CVBs at each stage of event planning – from selecting a destination to hosting the event – international associations can better enhance their events and delegates' experiences, and take their events to greater heights. **HO**

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



WORKING BETTER WITH DESTINATIONS

The role of convention and visitor bureaus (or CVB) has evolved over the past decade. In a context of competitive environment and economic crisis, associations are becoming more demanding. CVBs have adapted their services to the clients' needs and can be a trusted partner to make your event successful.

TEXT FLORENCE BINDELLE, SECRETARY GENERAL,
EUROPEANISSUERS AND ESAE VICE PRESIDENT



FLORENCE
BINDELLE

What should the organisation think about?

If you organise a small or large event, it is important you select the best location according to your needs. The earlier the process starts the greater your chances will be to find the appropriate location and have the best negotiating power. One of the first steps is to define your objectives and assess the priorities according to a set of criteria relevant to your association's event (access, security, size and location of convention cen-

tre, number and quality of hotels...). You should prepare an RFP (Request for Proposal) including all these criteria to send to the selected CVBs and indicate the expected time frame and the decision making process. Do not hesitate to market your event in this document, list how many cities are short-listed and who – like a local member for instance – is involved in the process.

Some CVBs comment that it is difficult to find out about the decision-making process within organisations. Make sure that everyone is aware about this process. In some cases, the umbrella organisations select the location; in other cases it is up to the national association. Some organisations are supported in this work by their core PCO (Professional Congress Organiser). For large events it is useful to have already a sense of direction and, for instance, to avoid sending an RFP to cities that do not have the capacity to meet your expectations.

What can the CVB bring to the selection process?

The CVB has a major role in this process. The CVB promotes a town, city, region, or country in order to increase the number of visitors. It can offer a large number of services to support the marketing of your event as well as a number of services (transportation options, free and post trips, e-blasts). Most of them are now organised to provide support to associations with a dedicated team and respond to needs according to your sectorial expertise. Such organisations promote economic development of a destination and are helpful to understand how the various partners work within the city. It can connect you with the local community. List your expectations from the CVB and ask your contact to recommend a selection of appropriate venues to meet your needs.



Collaboration with CVBs is essential during the three phases of preparation:

1. During the application

- To attract local support from the main tourist industries and other institutions
- To ensure the coordination of all services (accommodation, catering and other suppliers) to guarantee that all your requirements are fully met
- To help you prepare the report, which will be presented internally in the selection process.
- To organise a site inspection.

2. During the preparation of the congress

- To support the marketing campaigns of the organisation in order to attract delegates to the city (coupons, flyers, branding material, video...)
- To be present at previous events with a booth to promote the city

From my own experience an open, amicable and professional relationship with representatives of the CVB is a key element in the success of your event. The sooner you start, the better it is.

- To ensure the smooth collaboration with a Destination Management Company (DMC) when needed
- To suggest places for congress venues and parties
- To assist and advise in the selection of local suppliers such as caterers
- To organise the accommodation booking administration
- To help promote your education programme and invite the local community

- To facilitate contacts with political authorities and similar associations locally
- To suggest or provide a keynote speaker

3. During the congress

- To propose tourist attractions and activities in order to enhance the image of the destination to the eyes of the participants





What are the elements to be taken into consideration when talking to a CVB?

Check if an important event takes place at the same time in the city. This will influence your availabilities and costs. Some local events might also be of interest to your community and attendees.

Explain if you work with a local, core PCO or handle the event internally.

Define your budget. Budget is for many associations the main driver in the decision making and it is one of the most difficult areas to assess.

For some associations it is the main source of income, others tend to keep the costs down. You can ask the CVB to demonstrate how they will be able to support you in negotiating the best deals with local suppliers.

Assess the travel and accommodation costs (cost per delegate). Meeting planners want to make sure those remain reasonable in order to generate a large participation.

Market your event towards the location. You can mention the benefits that the congress brings to the city and the country and these benefits start usually years



before the meeting is actually held. For example, try to estimate the revenue generated by the congress in the cities that have welcomed the event in the past.

Check if you have a local representation of your association in the city or the country. This will provide you with a local support and promote the visibility and reputation of your local representation with an international event.

Ensure the quality of the congress centre and the accommodation is up to your expectations. For instance, the use of good technical facilities, appropriate hotels, easy access to and from the congress centre (walking distance is appreciated), level of security of the venue...

From my own experience an open, amicable and professional relationship with representatives of the CVB is a key element in the success of your event. The sooner you start, the better it is.

These representatives are excellent experts in their field and know the event business as well as their location very well. They often have a lot of experience that they can share with you. Listen to them but make your own decision in the end! 

5 TIPS TO WORK WITH CONVENTION BUREAUS

- 1. Explain who you are**, define your needs and the decision-making process from the first contact on. Trade shows are an ideal opportunity for planners to initiate a discussion.
- 2. Initiate the contact** and establish the relationship with the CVB early in the process, sometimes several years in advance. Get to know the people personally.

3. Share all important details and maintain strong communication through the process with the CVB. Maintain some consistency in terms of information and the completeness of that information as you move to the site selection process.

4. Keep realistic timelines in terms of decision-making process and update the CVB who maintains contacts with partners.

5. Close the loop and communicate with the CVB when another destination has been selected. Debrief the event with the CVB after the congress.

NEW REBRANDED ESAE WEBSITE

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ITS MISSION?

"AS THE HUB FOR ASSOCIATION LEADERS IN EUROPE, TO HELP MEMBERS WORK BOTH SMARTER AND BETTER BYCONNECTING KNOWLEDGE, INSIGHTS AND PEOPLE"

Florence Bindelle joined EuropeanIssuers, a pan-European organisation representing the interests of publicly quoted companies across Europe to the EU Institutions, in November 2015. Before that, she worked at FERMA, the Federation of European Risk Management Associations where she headed the office and was responsible for the management of the daily activities relations with the European Commission and other European organisations, including media, communication and the organisation of large congresses (1,500 delegates).

THE COLLABORATIVE TALENTS OF A DESTINATION

Collaboration, a sense of common purpose and shared leadership are fundamental to the success of attracting international meetings to a destination.



Having worked in the meetings industry and operated globally for many years I have learnt that the collaborative talents of a destination are key to the success of winning a congress bid and in turn successfully implementing the delivery of that congress. If you could compare the MICE market to a computer, the conference product would be the hardware, however, what makes a destination excel is its software which is the collaborative approach it takes to driving the destinations' business tourism strategy. This talent and joint up thinking stems from the coming together of the main stakeholders of that city. Those cities that present a united front from the perspective of venues, hotels, PCOs, DMCs, convention bureaux, tourism agencies, and city officials are often easier in which to work.

RUN LIKE A BUSINESS

Together, they strategically plan the business mix for their city, address key issues to enhance the city as a congress destination, combine their talents, share experiences and knowledge, all with the aim of enhancing the visitor/client experience. When cities are run like a business, they are more efficient, collaborative and competitive. If we consider each stakeholder group as a department in a company, when those departments communicate and share knowledge, the combined talents and experiences will lead to informed decision making and assists in its strategic direction.

The convention bureaux and the trade of a city (venues, hotels, PCOs, DMCs, etc.) are at the cold face

of selling in a global industry. They are in constant contact with prospective and repeat clients, they are close to the needs of end user and have a good understanding of what is on offer in competing cities. One could say that they represent and are champions of the potential client. It can only make sense that the business tourism leaders of a city glean from this knowledge to improve the competitive position of the city. It is through working groups, task forces, business tourism forums and annual conferences in a city that this information is shared and in turn helps form the decision making process and implementation planning for a city. Essentially, when practitioners and policy makers in any industry work together, the combined talents lead to success.

We cannot underestimate the value and the importance of the "ease of doing business" in a city. On a micro level, it is the "people on the ground", the trade of a city, the sales people in venues, hotels, PCOs, DMCs, the convention bureau who influence the decision of the end user. At the core of this group of people, is the neutral party, the convention bureau.



The collective energy of any industry working in harmony leads to strategies being effectively translated into actionable project plans with clear responsibility



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They represent the destination, they are often the first port of call, and their membership is the talent pool of the destination. It is this network and support mechanism that will ensure the successful delivery of the congress. Like any business, the delivery team must be informed, well trained and experienced and this leads to education.

I believe the city who brings their talent network together, proactively provides an annual education programme with relevant training for each sector of expertise, it's the city who will convert business at a higher ratio, will build an excellent reputation for supporting clients and in turn will deliver successful congresses. When trust and expertise come into play, that client will continue to come back. It is far less expensive and much more efficient to retain the client than find new clients.

MAXIMISING POTENTIAL

If we put the convention bureau at the core of the support network, it is also critical that they do not "go it alone". Like any network, it makes sense to maximise the potential of the talent pool, glean from

the experience of this network, all which in turn gives confidence to the end client that their congress will be supported, their objectives delivered and their delegates will have both an enhanced learning experience and enjoy the city to its full potential.

The support for the client does not end at connecting the client with the talent network and service providers, the PCO and the convention bureaus are also the clients' connect to what I call the Triple Helix: city and government officials, academia representing the knowledge economy of the city and the corporates of the city who will help fund the congress. It is the successful engagement of all three sectors that entices the client to consider the bid and the eventual awarding of a congress.

The city that brands itself to welcome the delegation, the restaurants who put up welcome signs in their windows, the taxi drivers who are aware of the congress and give a warm welcome at the airport, the policy makers who create a relevant legacy programme from the congress, the educators who showcase the knowledge economy of their academic

institutions and finally the corporates and funders who help financially support the congress, is an efficient and experienced destination.

The commitment to collaboration leads to energised engagement, improved vision and opens the eye to opportunity. The collective energy of any industry working in harmony leads to strategies being effectively translated into actionable project plans with clear responsibility. Measurement of success and failure are identified, well-understood, and communicated to all stakeholders. Excitement for the "to be" state easily overcomes the inertia of the status quo. **40**



This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author Nicola McGrane, Managing Director, Conference Partners, Ireland, and IAPCO Council Member. IAPCO represents today 115 professional organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 40 countries. info@iapco.org / www.iapco.org

INTERVIEW

JAN TONKIN

PIONEERING INDUSTRY EDUCATION

Founder and managing director of Auckland-based The Conference Company, Jan Tonkin has taken on a two-year term as president of the professional conference organisers' association, IAPCO. She explains here what makes IAPCO stand out as an organisation but also all about her love of New Zealand as a meeting destination. *Interview Rémi Dévé*





JAN
TONKIN

You've been recently elected IAPCO President. What are your ambitions for your term?

It's not so much about my ambitions. I believe a President's role is to ensure the vision for the organisation reflects the interests of its members, is crystal clear and to then guide the Council as it works, on behalf of the members, to realise that vision which is underpinned by the concept of 'driving excellence'. That takes many forms – members sharing best practice with one another, promoting best practice, encouraging members to adhere to the association's quality standards, developing education programmes which are highly relevant not just for PCOs but also for the wider meetings industry and drive business excellence.

With that in mind we have established a number of Council portfolios – designed to ensure we are not only active as an organisation but we have a sound foundation in place to grow membership and generate the financial resources to support our activities. We're privileged to be working with industry partners who are always looking at innovative ways of engaging with us.

Having members in 41 countries I am always very mindful of the need to think globally but I do have a special place in my heart for my own region – Asia Pacific. It is an incredibly diverse region where the meetings industry continues to grow in strength rapidly. I am very keen to profile that strength and highlight the great work being done in the region, while also looking to encourage those delivering conference management services to consider IAPCO membership.

IAPCO has always focused on education and you've launched new seminars like the EDGE seminar. How successful have they been so far? What are IAPCO's achievements in the education area?

IAPCO is a pioneer in industry education delivering its week-long, residential training course in the Wolfsberg Centre in Switzerland for 37 consecutive years. Many of today's seniors in the industry credit their career start to participation in this seminar and have fond memories of the camaraderie which led to ongoing friendships as their career paths criss-crossed.

After a good deal of thought and debate IAPCO decided to move away from one fixed location for education and create programmes which were both accessible and affordable world-wide. That meant not just face-to-face education but also online.

IAPCO now has three educational offerings – EDGE (Experts in Dynamic Global Education) seminars, Web-EDGE and Bespoke seminars. Faculty comprises senior PCO practitioners who are immersed in the

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**HOW OLD IAPCO
WILL BE IN 2018**

business, curious about new technologies and committed to best practice. Content is designed not just for PCOs but for the wider industry, in particular CVBs, venues and convention centres.

The first EDGE seminar was held in Auckland in August last year to wonderful accolades. 80% of the participants completed the evaluation and every one of them said that their expectations had been met. 97% of them gave the seminar a score of 8 or more out of 10. Similarly successful seminars have been held in Copenhagen in January and Whistler this May. Plans are already underway for seminars in Seoul in November, Athens in January and Kuala Lumpur next September; a number of expressions of interest have been received from other destinations. The challenge will be fulfilling demand!

Web-EDGE brings a new dimension to IAPCO's commitment to quality education. It's online and, as is the case with the EDGE seminars, enables participants to accrue CMP credits. Currently a "Starter Pack" (web-EDGE Level 1) is available via IAPCO's website and, over time, the library will be expanded to deliver online learning at three levels.

It's an exciting departure for IAPCO and one that seems to be meeting market needs. André Vietor, who



chairs the Training Academy, and his fellow faculty members tell me that they are both challenged and really energised by the change in direction.

As it has done in the past, IAPCO continues to deliver Bespoke seminars for groups or organisations. These programmes are always tailored to suit the host's needs and are typically very interactive.

IAPCO will celebrate its 50th anniversary within your presidency. How do members look back?

IAPCO's ability to retain members speaks volumes about its ongoing relevance as it continues to adapt its activities in a volatile meetings world. The Association was founded on camaraderie and principles of sharing and collaborating. Those principles have never changed and I see at our annual conference they are more important than ever. I am always both astonished and gratified by the willingness members, who compete with one another, show to discuss issues frankly and share their know-how to help each other deliver a better service.

While planning for the anniversary is in its very early stages, I know that all those attributes of IAPCO's ongoing success will come to the fore. Also, as PCOs, we know a good deal about celebration events so I'm sure February 2018 will be a special time on our calendar.

As a PCO based in New Zealand, can you explain how different the work culture is in the East and in the West?

I don't think it's a comparison that can be easily made in today's world. We are such a mix of cultures now and my city, Auckland, is no exception. That diversity is definitely reflected in our work culture in the form of openness to various views and the ability to be flexible and accommodating. That approach serves us well in the meetings industry in New Zealand as delegates attending international conferences in our country tend to come from all over the globe.

Can you share what you like about New Zealand as an association destination?

Time and time again international associations tell us how much their delegates enjoyed the warmth and hospitality when they hold their conference in New Zealand. That, combined with opportunities to enjoy amazing holidays pre- or post-conference the length and breadth of the country, mean that delegate numbers are always gratifyingly high.

Professor Bryan Storey of the University of Canterbury in New Zealand who convened the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research's Open Science Conference summed it up perfectly when he said: "Tourism New Zealand's Business Events team

assured me that delegates always like coming to New Zealand because it is a safe destination, it is accessible, it is a beautiful country and it has the reputation for welcoming people. They were correct; our delegate numbers exceeded expectations and the conference was voted the best ever."

We genuinely enjoy showcasing our country to visitors and making them feel welcome. We like to impart the spirit of manaakitanga which, in the language of the Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, refers to hospitality, kindness, generosity, showing respect, caring for others.

Our food and wines are of the highest quality, the proximity of memorable landscapes and activities to key conference destinations mean inspirational experiences can be easily accessed and the range of meeting venues and accommodation offerings is wide.

With a small population it is easy to make things happen and establish connections. We can readily create introductions to professionals and academics who can contribute to conference programmes and share their expertise during technical tours.

Those of us in the meetings industry know one another well and work as a team on international conferences, complementing one another's roles, making decisions quickly and always staying focused on making visitors' time in our country special. **HQ**

CREATING MORE SUSTAINABLE, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS DESTINATIONS

By 2050 70% of the world's population of almost 10 billion people will live in cities. It is becoming increasingly critical for association executives to broaden their agendas to include strategies to help their organisation and its members become part of the ecosystem focused on creating more sustainable, healthy and prosperous cities.



Destinations Management Organisations and Convention Bureaus can be key partners on this journey. However many associations are not leveraging the skills and resources available to them, while also failing to walk the talk of their values.

PIONEERING DMOS

A growing number of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs and CVBs) around the world have started to really understand that their role is not only to promote business tourism, but to be a key part of their cities economic social and environmental development strategy. As a key pillar of this strategy, leading DMOs are developing the capability to support visiting associations and corporates to achieve their sustainability goals.

So what are the leaders doing to make their destination a more sustainable partner for associations?

- Developing Sustainable Destination masterplans and roadmaps
- Creating an ecosystem with private and public partners to support local businesses, visitors and the community

When planning for the next event, association executives needs to consider how their conference or congress can help them and their members to accelerate their sustainability strategy.

- Building capacity of local suppliers through education, standards and knowledge sharing
- Providing and promoting financial incentives to help visiting organisations and local partners to implement more sustainable solutions.
- Communicating strategies, results and stories of progress
- Measuring, benchmarking and reporting on their sustainability performance

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ASSOCIATIONS

When planning for the next event, association executives needs to consider how their conference or congress can help them and their members to accelerate their sustainability strategy. They need also need to think how to maximise the services provided by the DMO. Some keys steps include:

1. Content: Develop an event experience and program that promotes knowledge sharing, and co-creation of new sustainability solutions, processes and products

2. Think legacy: Consider what can be left in the city after the event. How can the event develop knowledge in the local community, build business, and catalyse social change. Think how event delegates can be engaged to support local community projects with their skills and muscles

3. Partnerships: Reach out to the DMO and ask them to facilitate introductions to key local players in the private, public and not for profit world

4. Make it competitive: Ask the DMO about the sustainability programmes of the city and its events industry. Include sustainability into the RFP and decision making progress. Assign 5-10% of the selection criteria to sustainability factors of the destination, and then shop around.

5. Walk the talk: Choose suppliers who have solutions that can help to reduce waste and carbon emissions, and use more sustainable and healthy materials to produce the event and feed your guests.

A HELPING HAND

However it can be challenging for an Association Exec to find a "sustainable destination". To simplify this task the Global Destination Sustainability Index was launched in March 2016. The GDS-Index is a collaborative business initiative created to help Destinations, Event Planners and Suppliers to benchmark the sustainability strategies and performance of destinations and its' meetings and events industry. Today over 35 cities including Barcelona, Copenhagen, the Hague, Helsinki, Houston, Geneva, Frankfurt, Oslo, Reykjavik, Stockholm, Stuttgart, Sydney are in the process of benchmarking. The goal is to have 100 cities in 2017.

Smart associations and destinations are using sustainability as a competitive edge. It's a way to differentiate, to attract customers and investment, to stimulate innovation, and recruit the best talent. 

MORE INFORMATION
IS AVAILABLE ON
WWW.GDS-INDEX.COM

The article is contributed by Guy Bigwood, MCI Group Sustainability Director. As a thought-leader in Sustainability, he has held various association executive roles. For the last ten years he has been consulting and advising on the development and implementation of sustainability strategies for association, destinations, corporations and governments.



Headquarters gives voice to Mark Levin. With three decades of experience as an association executive, he is also an internationally-known speaker and consultant to the nonprofit community. He will, in each edition, share his insights on the association world.

HOW DESTINATIONS AND VENUES CAN IMPROVE THEIR CHANCES OF ATTRACTING ASSOCIATION CLIENTS

Meeting planning has always been one of my favorite responsibilities as an association executive. I love hearing how much my members (of the Chain Link Fence Manufacturers Institute, or CLFMI) enjoy our meetings, and am thrilled that our attendance has remained so high even through some difficult economic times. What I don't always like is the site selection process.

I know many meeting planners really like the royal treatment they get on their site inspection trips, but I travel all the time so when I had to travel recently from our Washington, D.C. Headquarters to make a final selection for one of our future meetings I wasn't thrilled, but it was something I had to do.

I had appointments set up with the sales managers at the three hotels we were considering and had hoped to see all three in no more than a day or a day and a half at most. When I arrived at the first hotel for my morning appointment, the sales manager greeted me and we exchanged cards, and she said, "Mr. Levin, thank you so much for considering our property and coming all this way. I have your meeting specifications and think our hotel would be perfect for your association annual meeting. Let me show you around".

So we toured the hotel, and in all honesty it was a lovely property that would easily be a good choice for my group. I was glad that after the first property that I would have an adequate option. She asked if I had any questions, and I told her nothing major and that I would get back to her.

I went off to my second appointment and it was basically the same routine and knew instinctively that this property, too, could be a good match for our group. I am such an impatient person that I was thinking I might be able to tour the third

property quickly and get a flight back home that same night instead of staying overnight. I called the sales manager and asked if we could meet a little earlier. When I arrived at the last property the sales manager came out to greet me, we exchanged cards, and I was ready to get started. Then she said, "Mr. Levin, thanks for coming all this way. I got your meeting summary, but before we tour the hotel could we sit for a few minutes and just chat?"

So much for catching the late flight. I was pretty tired by now so it wasn't worth rushing. We sat down and ordered some coffee, and then my trip – indeed, my whole outlook on effective venue-association relationships – changed.

The sales manager turned and said, "Mr. Levin, I just wanted to ask you one question before I show you the hotel. If you chose our hotel for your meeting, and today were the last day of that meeting and your members were leaving to go home, and they were saying 'I think this is the best hotel we've ever used for one of CLFMI's meetings,' what would they be talking about? What would have made it 'the best' for them?"

To be honest, it was an easy question to answer because I knew my members pretty well after 20- plus years as their Executive Director. So I started going down my list;

ASSOCIATION INSIGHTS from Mark Levin



If association clients feel that you truly understand what their priorities are, and you can help them create the best experience for their attendees, you have a competitive advantage over everyone else.

"Well," I said, "the first thing they would have noticed were the lines at check in. They hate to have been traveling all day to get to our meeting and then have to wait in long lines to get into their room. Then they'd notice the signage-how easy it is to get around the property. They really get frustrated in hotels where they have to ask directions all the time. As international business people, they also need 24 hour room service, and they don't like getting charged huge fees for high speed internet connections and then get restrictions on where in the hotel they can use it."

I kept going on and on for a few minutes telling the sales manager what my members liked and didn't like when attending our meetings.

I saw her taking some notes, then she said, "Mr. Levin, if that's what your members expect at one of CLFMI's meetings, then I think our hotel would be a great match for you. Let me start by introducing you to our Front Desk manager, and he can explain what we do when our registration lines start getting backed up."

Guess where we held our meeting?

Properties, destinations, venues, exposition centers and other industry partners need to realize that in today's world it is truly a buyers' market. Buyers have all the options, all the information, and all the communications technology they need to

find out about you. What's important is what **you** find out about **them**. I believe the number one skill meeting industry professionals need to have if they want to do more business with the association community is the skill of *asking the right questions*.

It isn't about you. It isn't about the venue, it isn't about the destination, it isn't about the convention bureau. It's about the client. If association clients feel that you truly understand what their priorities are, and you can help them create the best experience for their attendees, you have a competitive advantage over everyone else. Getting information on a Client Profile form is the start, not the end, of the job. Asking the right questions will get you where you want to go.



Mark Levin, CAE, CSP 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 (mark@baileadership.com / www.baileadership.com)



G20

G20 Looks East



Hangzhou: where 2016 G20 summit will be held

As a center of wealth and innovation, Hangzhou, capital of the Zhejiang province in China, will host the 2016 Group of Twenty (G20) summit. President Xi Jinping said: "Hangzhou is a city that embraces a unique style, a combination of history and modernity." President Xi looks forward to greeting all World leaders at West Lake next September.

Paradise on Earth

Hangzhou is picturesque, praised as paradise on earth for enchanting culture and history, two World Heritage Sites — the incredibly beautiful West Lake and the Grand Canal — along with lush rolling hills, spectacular pagodas and temples, and fragrant fields of tea. It is the happiest city in China and no other city in the world today can meet the high demands of the MICE industry as well.

The New Option for the MICE market

Considered one of the top ten places to visit in 2016 by Travel + Leisure, Hangzhou is a new MICE destination in China. Top international chain hotels and many noteworthy local chains have been established here for a number of years. Experienced MICE service teams are easily available in Hangzhou to help make every event or meeting memorable and professional.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL PSYCHOANALYTIC CONGRESS

In 1907 Ernest Jones, a British neurologist and psychoanalyst, visited Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist who founded analytical psychology, in Zurich.

Jones had not yet met Freud, though he had made himself very familiar with his writings and had been practicing the psychoanalytic technique with his patients in London since the end of 1906.

It was Jones who suggested to Jung that an international meeting should be arranged to bring together colleagues from various countries in order to discuss their common interest in psychoanalysis. In view of this, it may be claimed that Jones was the man who first put forward the idea that eventually gave rise to the **International Psychoanalytical Association**.

Freud welcomed the proposal, and it was he who chose Salzburg as the best place for the projected meeting. Jones wished its title to be **International Psychoanalytical Congress**, but Jung decided to call it First Congress for Freudian Psychology.



However, this very informal meeting is now reckoned to be the first **International Psychoanalytical Congress**, although the **International Association** had not yet been founded.

It was during this meeting in Salzburg, on 27 April 1908, that the idea of an **International Association** was discussed and agreed upon.

This picture doesn't unfortunately date back to 1907. It was taken at the International Psychoanalytical Congress in Weimar, in 1911. You can spot Freud and Jung in the second row. 📷

Want to share some memories of past – if not ancient – congresses? Do you have old pictures, cassettes, VHS tapes in your attic? Don't hesitate to take a picture of them and send it to remi@meetingmediagroup.com. We'll be happy to share them!

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ICCA RANKINGS

SECOND-TIER DESTINATIONS IN GREAT SHAPE

It has become a habit now. Each year, the meetings captured by ICCA are growing in numbers. For 2015, they got a record number of 12,076 rotating international association meetings, the largest ever since the creation of ICCA, and a increase of 571 meetings compared to 2014. Rémi Dévé writes

First an observation to put things in perspective. ICCA never said they were giving the full picture of all meetings taking place in a given destination. To be included, "ICCA" meetings must be organised by associations, must be held on a regular basis, have at least 50 delegates, and rotate between at least three countries. By no means, it includes for instance corporate, intergovernmental, non-rotating, etc., events. Only then would the picture be complete...

As for the matter, the city rankings are a bit more interesting than the country ones. After all, when it comes to countries, it's all a matter of proportions. It's only normal smaller countries do not fare as good as bigger ones if you only look at absolute figures.

But, just like in the last couple of years, what the statistics reveal is the strength of secondary cities. Take Germany for instance: 667 meetings were held in the country in 2015, but only 195 in the capital

city Berlin. That means an outstanding 472 events took place in other German destinations. The same goes for France and Paris or the UK and London: it's not only the capital cities that helped secure a great number of events and a good position in the rankings, but obviously other, dare we say 'secondary' towns... One thing is sure: the ICCA stats say a lot about the dynamism of second-tier destinations and regional convention bureaus... and maybe convention centres!

In the city ranking, the "winners" are the cities with the smallest losses, or with a very small growth; new number one city Berlin has only 2 more meetings compared to 2014, while Paris has 28 meetings less than in 2014, Vienna has 24 and Madrid 29 less. Barcelona is 2 down and London is 5 up and Madrid is 29 down.

Since the total number of meetings in 2015 has increased, this means that the meetings are more equally spread out amongst destinations, and relatively smaller, second tier destinations are becoming more and more successful at attracting association meetings.

CITY RANKINGS: BERLIN NEW NUMBER ONE

Berlin is the new number one city, at the cost of Paris, which was #1 last year and is now second. Even though the order is quite different, the top seven is made up of the same cities as last year. ▶





Barcelona climbs 2 places and is third and Vienna drops 2 places and is now fourth. London climbs one place and is now number five, together with Madrid, which dropped two places. Singapore remains seventh. Istanbul climbs one place to eighth. The newcomers in the Top Ten? Lisbon and Copenhagen, which must be celebrating as we speak.

TOP 10 CITY RANKING BY NUMBER OF MEETINGS ORGANISED IN 2015

Rank	City	# Meetings in 2015
1	Berlin	195
2	Paris	186
3	Barcelona	180
4	Vienna	178
5	London	171
	Madrid	171
7	Singapore	156
8	Istanbul	148
9	Lisbon	145
10	Copenhagen	138

**COUNTRY RANKINGS:
UNITED KINGDOM CLIMBS TO #3**

The top 9 countries all remain in that top echelon, with the USA retaining top ranking and Germany strengthening 2nd place. United Kingdom climbs one place to number three at the cost of Spain which drops one place. France, Italy, Japan and China retain respectively 5th - 8th place. The Netherlands climbs one place, now sharing 8th place with China, and Canada is the only newcomer in the top 10.

Altogether, ICCA identified 94 additional international association meetings taking place in the USA in 2015, 8 additional meetings in Germany and 39 additional meetings in the United Kingdom. Spain dropped 6 and France dropped 11 meetings. 

MORE INFO ON
WWW.ICCAWORLD.ORG

In the city ranking, the “winners” are the cities with the smallest losses, or with a very small growth; new number one city Berlin has only 2 more meetings compared to 2014.

TOP 10 COUNTRY RANKING BY NUMBER OF MEETINGS ORGANISED IN 2015

Rank	Country	# Meetings in 2015
1	USA	925
2	Germany	667
3	United Kingdom	582
4	Spain	572
5	France	522
6	Italy	504
7	Japan	355
8	China	333
9	Netherlands	333
10	Canada	308

At this very moment a group of scientists is falling under a cat’s spell: Schrödinger’s. Time to give your participants a similar treat?

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Erwin Schrödinger, Austrian physicist, Nobel Prize winner © Bildarchiv/ÖNB

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TSHWANE

A BOOMING CONTENDER FOR ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Tshwane has made noticeable strides on the ICCA rankings, the annual list of the world's top cities for hosting international association meetings. One of the top 10 cities in Africa, Tshwane is ranked 254 in the world - up from 284 compared to 2014 - a testament of the city working hard to be a key player in the meetings industry.

Striving to become an international business travel destination of choice, the City of Tshwane has identified business tourism as a catalytic economic game changer. "Tourism creates jobs, it builds understanding and unity, it breaks down barriers," says the Deputy City Manager for Strategy Development and Implementation, Lindiwe Kwele. The international associations meetings market is seen as one of the most resilient sectors in the travel industry during times of economic turbulence.

LONG-TERM VISION

Fittingly, Tshwane has recently hosted the Tshwane International Trade and Infrastructure Investment Conference (TITIIC) that took place at the CSIR International Convention Centre. On this occasion, Executive Mayor Kgosisentso Ramokgopa explained Tshwane's long-term Vision 2055. "We have identified four high-potential sectors namely education & the knowledge economy, agricultural production & agro-processing, tourism, and the green economy - that could contribute up to 490,000 jobs and R125-billion to GVA by 2030. These sectors offer big opportunities for citizens with different levels of skills to find a job in the near future."

Tshwane has indeed a long-term development vision. One of the largest metropolitan areas in South

284

THE NUMBER OF PLACES TSHWANE GAINED IN THE ICCA RANKINGS

Africa, it is opening a new chapter by developing the municipality into a first-class destination for visitors, investors and residents. The city will soon compete with Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban by becoming a much sought-after player in the meeting world.

Tshwane is home to 134 foreign missions, 7 research centers and 4 universities. By investing in infrastructure and leveraging its unique characteristics such as access to academic institutions, strong pan-African ties through the diplomatic corps, and innovative research and development bodies, it aims to attract more businesses and conferences, and thus build a strong future.

ENHANCING FACTORS

Several factors enhance Tshwane as a destination: all tourism sites are very close to one another; it offers authentic South African experiences in the villages, the townships and the capital city; and it

offers unique attractions where travellers can get an "Out of Africa" experience within the boundaries of a major city centre.

Business visitors have access to high-quality hotels and conference centres. Infrastructure is world-class. Tshwane is within easy reach from OR Tambo International Airport, while the banking and telecommunications systems are comparable with the best. It is also considered the intellectual capital of the country, and the knowledge hub of the continent. Some 80% of the country's research and development takes place in Tshwane. Now, with the much improved ICCA listing, organisers have another reason to turn to the City of Tshwane to host their meetings. 

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CSIR International Convention Centre

WOMEN DELIVER CONGRESS COPENHAGEN, A FEMININE POWERHOUSE

Third week of May 2016: the streets of Copenhagen are colored in yellow, orange, blue, purple and green, with women wearing their traditional clothes. On the occasion of the 4th Women Deliver Congress, which aims to improve women's and girls' health, rights and well-being globally, almost 6,000 women and men from all over the world came together in the Danish capital.

Cécile Koch reports

When Wonderful Copenhagen asked me to participate in the congress I immediately said yes. I had already attended the association's third congress in Kuala Lumpur in 2013 and was interested to see how the Women Deliver organisation would perform and how Copenhagen would top KL's edition!

WOMEN WITH POWER

Speakers and panelists came from various horizons, whether from the government, political institutions or private companies. The plenary session entitled "Men with Power" especially drew my attention. What, indeed, drives men to stand up for women? American physician Willie Parker's mother was a driving force for him for instance. A genuine belief that "only together men and women will create a better society for all" added Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tedros Adnanom of Ethiopia who received the "Women Deliver Award for Perseverance" from President Jill Sheffield. The congress indeed wanted to focus on solutions, and not just talk about problems.

Huge support came from several queens – from The Netherlands to Jordan – and princesses – from Denmark to Norway – who since years advocate to improve women and girls' well-being. Over 800 students had applied to attend this congress for free; along them there were approximately 320 journalists and more than 120 exhibitors. It seems the congress has turned into a larger-than-life event, with an impact stretching out far beyond its original intentions.



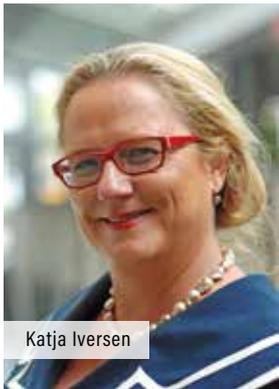
WHY DENMARK, WHY COPENHAGEN

One of the first questions that came up to my mind was of course: "Why did the association choose Copenhagen as their congress destination?" President and founder Jill Sheffield said that Denmark's position on gender equality was a major reason to start with.

But there was more to it. Katja Iversen, Women Deliver CEO, said that the people of Wonderful Copenhagen and all Danish suppliers involved made it so easy for her. She said: "With 115 concurrent sessions, 20 plenary sessions, and only 18 staff in the organisation and a lot of protocol, the congress is quite complicated to grasp and set up. But the Bella

Center has been designed in such a way that it is easy to find your way and to feel at ease: attendees found ample place to network and could watch panel discussions on screens placed in the open areas."

But this kind of organisation also requires a very tough and professional dedicated team. As Henrik Dyhr, congress director of BDP, the destination management company in charge, told us, they had to make up more than 26 different categories of participants, 16 different types of badges, deal with all kind of visa problems, and take care of over 120 exhibitors. In short, there were months of preparation and very few hours of sleep before and during the event...



Katja Iversen



Bella Center



THE BAUHAUS APPROACH

But still, why Copenhagen? you would ask. Of course, the fact that Denmark has been ranked the world's best country for women to live in according to the US News and World Report, helps. But that was in 2015 and the congress decision had been made in 2014...

Lotte Hansen, from the Danish Women Deliver Consortium, explained how she and her team decided to approach the organisation in a different way. She said that she applied the Bauhaus School of Art philosophy called "Form-follows-function". This entails that the inner value related to the congress should be developed first, and then followed by the actual putting up of the form. "Once the agenda has been set, you can make the right partnerships within the Danish community and you are able to find fitting speakers and panelists. It has as advantage that the content is specific and clear to all and acted upon accordingly", she said.

**Katja Iversen,
Women Deliver CEO:**
*"In Copenhagen, we
have not been treated as
clients, but as partners."*

Many local municipalities and museums but also ministers and mothers worked together around gender equality in an extensive outreach programme staged in Copenhagen in conjunction with the congress. Public activities such as exhibitions, concerts, debates, bike runs and happenings took place all over town. It seems everyone in Copenhagen was involved: public and private companies, cultural institutions, sports- female- youth- and migrants- associations, the City of Copenhagen itself, the Danish Monarchy and the Danish Parliament... the outreach was enormous.

DISCOVERIES IN COPENHAGEN

Food and Copenhagen are almost synonymous. Who does not know Noma? But I discovered some other restaurants which will also appeal to foody lovers. Restaurant Fru Nimb, situated in the famous Tivoli Gardens, has, a very stylish Nordic white setting with typical Danish food. The open sandwiches have been created here and, according to the chef, the sandwiches are all lavishly topped with love! (www.frunimb.nimb.dk) ▷



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Ahn Lê (see below) founded her restaurant some years ago. She has found inspiration for her cuisine in her Vietnamese roots and she pays a lot of attention to fresh ingredients. Nice waiters, taking time to explain the different dishes, attention to all details... all this contributes to a welcoming and warm ambiance. And as if it was necessary to raise the bar, the chef is French! Worth noting also is that, next to the restaurant Ahn has also set up buffet and reception catering services. (www.lele.dk)



Another new idea came up from Mette Helbaek. According to her, "if a picture says a thousand words, a meal says even more", so her language is food. She created a concept called 'Table Street Cuisine' in the Copenhagen Market Hall, where you share food with other Torvehallerse (Market Hall) guests seated across 100 tables. Mette also runs a much sought-after restaurant in the greenhouse of Denmark's first rooftop farm, Stedsans ØsterGro. (www.cleansimpellocal.com) 

MORE INFO ON COPENHAGEN AS A MEETING DESTINATION

WWW.COPENHAGENCVB.COM

STRONG DANISH LADIES

Wonderful Copenhagen's communication manager Ulrika Mårtensson had us meet some leading ladies of Denmark. Efficient as ladies can be, she organised an early breakfast panel discussion. Present were the mayor of the Children and Youth Administration of the City of Copenhagen, Pia Allerslev; the Managing Director of Microsoft Development Center Copenhagen, Charlotte Mark; the CEO of Unisex Progress, Charlotte Kirkegaard; the head of the Danish Women Deliver Consortium, Lotte Hansen and Anh Lê, author and founder of restaurant LÈLÈ.

Kirkegaard said that the situation is not as yet ideal for Danish women, giving as example the fact that although 10 to 15% of women are on board level (revealed by a 2016 study), this is not the case for CEOs. Although it has to be recognised that Denmark offers a virtually free

healthcare and education system, an earnings-related childcare system and a parental leave policy, changes are still to happen in people's mind. In spite of the fact that they score higher than boys in high school, girls tend to not choose technical studies, Mark mentioned.

Within Microsoft Denmark also, only 17% of the engineers are women, so a lot has to be done in

this field. Allerslev said that education is one of the priorities to make sure that girls get through the famous glass ceiling, and that Denmark needs more female role models. Vietnam-born Lê said that it was thanks to her mother who made sure she did not stay within her own community and mixed with Danish people that she made a career.



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MEETINGS IN SHANGHAI MADE EASY

Shanghai is one of the first cities in China to have implemented a 144-hour visa-free policy, which allows foreign visitors to arrive to and depart from the metropolis via its airports, cruise terminals and train stations without a visa, providing their overall stay is within the six-day limit. Rémi Dévé reports

The relaxation on travel restrictions is an upgrade of the current policy that allows passport holders from 51 countries to transit through several Chinese cities for up to 72 hours without a visa. The service, introduced in 2013, has proven popular, with more than 100,000 foreigners having taken advantage of it.

Following the trend of globalisation, the Chinese government is continuing to lower the barriers between China and friendly visitors from around the world. All the more reasons to organise a conference in Shanghai, as things are becoming increasingly easier for both planners and delegates.

But what to do within 144 hours in Shanghai? Headquarters has three ideas!

• **Wander around the Bund:** Facing the Huangpu River, Shanghai's mother river, the Bund has been a symbol of the city for over 100 years.

It was not only witness to Shanghai's legendary past, but also fully demonstrates to the world the city's remarkable ability to absorb foreign cultures

• **Get coffee in Xujiahui Business Circle:** Xujiahui is located in the southwestern part of downtown Shanghai, immediately adjacent to Shanghai Jiaotong University. As one of Shanghai's ten famous commercial centres, Xujiahui is a home to myriad shops, office buildings, hotels and restaurants.

• **Get some culture at M50 Creative Garden:** a characteristic complex of historical buildings from the 1930s to the 1990s, the garden is the best preserved architectural legacy of the national textile industry on the banks of the Suzhou River, and now home to 100 artists and designing units. 

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• **2 Oceania Countries:** Australia, New Zealand

• **6 Asian Countries:** Korea, Japan, Singapore, Brunei, United Arab Emirates, Qatar

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MORE INFO ON THE VISA-FREE POLICY
ON SH-IMMIGRATION.GOV.CN/LIST-PAGEEN.ASPX?LX=40&ID=4414

51 THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
CONCERNED BY THE 144-HOUR
VISA-FREE POLICY

THE MEETINGS VIRUS HAS REACHED KENYA

For the first time in African history the meetings virus seems to be spreading around in pandemic proportions. Like many other South African and East African countries, Kenya has proven that it is capable of running a successful tourism industry (and they do know a thing or two about running). Thanks to the Kenyatta International Conference Centre, MICE is already beyond the starting blocks. Yet, according to Fred Simiyu, General Manager of the KICC, much still needs to be done. Marcel A.M. Vissers reports

STABILITY IS INVARIABLY A CONDITION FOR SUCCESS

Stable African countries stand a better chance of being successful in the meetings industry than others. Kenya suffered considerably from the insurgency and terrorism and is still dealing with the consequences, especially in Mombasa. However, this does not mean that everything has come to a standstill. On the contrary. Last year the first edition of the Africa Associations Congress took place in Nairobi.

The delegates were unanimous: it was a major success. This year the event will return to Nairobi on November 8-9. Fred Simiyu believes it will considerably boost the meetings industry in his country. If only because it will demonstrate to the government how important it is, even though preparations to launch a convention bureau are also urgently required.

For the very first time Kenya's Economic Blueprint Vision 2030 has identified MICE as a niche product, one of the priority sectors bound to drive the country's economy into the next phase of growth. And needless to say there are high hopes regarding the launch of MICE in the resort cities of Mombasa, Nairobi, Kisumu and Eldoret.

MOMBASA STANDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

For many readers Mombasa will bring back nostalgic memories of time spent in this well-known port city on the shores of the Indian Ocean. A city of salt and of spice, of dreams and of battles, of poetry, of seafaring stories and of wave upon wave of traders from faraway lands. Unfortunately, today these memories are beginning to fade. Though holidaymakers may have deserted the long stretches of white sandy beaches today they are steadily being replaced by convention delegates.

Mombasa inherited a string of excellent hotels from its tourism heyday. As many of them have superb conference facilities, Mombasa's conversion to a hotel conference city came about seamlessly. The Whitesands and Nyali hotels are but a few of the many fine examples. The Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort and Spa, located on one of the longest beaches protected by the Mombasa Marine Park, offers excellent some excellent space. There are also two Nyali Beach hotels with great meeting infrastructure. The iconic Nyali International Beach Hotel & Spa has a unique history and social significance, combining timeless grandeur with a new and contemporary spirit.

And if on top of that you feel the need to leave your Mombasa conference quarters to visit something out of the ordinary don't forget to stroll through the Old Town and explore the historic Fort Jesus. 



FRED SIMIYU

MORE INFO ON KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE AT WWW.KICC.CO.KE

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BOTSWANA MEETING IN GABORONE

Let's go straight to the point: Gaborone is the capital of Botswana and a very down-to-earth city. However, the country, only a trifle bigger than France, has an abundance of unspoilt nature. Like in many other East African nations the call to develop MICE is very present. This is the message that I received from Jillian Blackbeard from the Marketing Department of the Botswana Tourism Organisation.

Marcel A.M. Vissers reports

AMAZING NATURAL WONDER

One cannot talk about Botswana without mentioning that it is one of the world's truly great natural wonders, one that is actually visible from space. To visit the country, it is recommended to lose no time in getting acquainted with the planes of Wilderness Air or MackAir if you wish to fly from one Safari camp to the next Game park. Air corridors in this part of the world have much similarity with our European motorways. To really discover the soul of Botswana there is no better option than to fly over the country's jewel in the crown: the Okavango Delta, a spectacular seasonal river delta that never reaches the sea.

You may wonder what all this has to do with MICE? Jillian Blackbeard's answer to this is quite clear: *"Botswana is a dream destination for tourism and more particularly for incentive travel. I am thinking in particular of the large portfolio of luxury safari experiences (both desert and delta safaris) that we have to offer. We are the leaders in this segment in East Africa and although MICE is still in the early stages of development the Botswana Tourism Organisation is very decided to develop it."*



Chobe River

She continues: *"To be fair I have to point out that for the time being meeting facilities are still limited in our country. The starting point is generally our capital city, with the Grand Palm Hotel Casino and Convention Resort as the highlight. For business gatherings there are a few well-equipped lodges with excellent meeting facilities like Chobe Game lodge, Xudum Okavango Delta, Duma Tau and Cresta Mowana, just to name a few."*

NEW LOOK AT THE GRAND PALM

To get a good idea of MICE capacity you need to take a look at the local convention centre. In Botswana the obvious choice is the Peermont Convention Resort, one of the finest facilities of its kind in Southern Africa. In my opinion this convention centre (GICC or Gaborone International Convention Centre) can be better described as an oversized villa for meetings: stately, surrounded by water and luscious gardens and of course oozing with African hospitality and warmth.

But it is definitely also a resort because in addition to its multifaceted convention centre for up to 1,800 delegates several major hotels are present: the 4-star Peermont Mondior hotel, the luxury Peermont Walmart hotel and the 3-star Metcourt Inn. Another property with excellent meetings facilities is the Gaborone Lansmore Hotel. Located in one of the two towers in the iconic Masa Square in Gaborone, the Lansmore Masa Square Hotel has 153 rooms, a restaurant, conference centre and a non-affiliated casino. Some in the country tend to call it the ultimate work, shop, play and stay destination in the country. **BU**



Gaborone International Convention Centre

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HIGH FIVE TO FORMOSA!

FIVE REASONS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH MICE ACTIVITIES IN TAIWAN

MEET TAIWAN, Taiwan's MICE Promotion Program, recently released five reasons for choosing Taiwan as a prime destination for MICE activities in Asia. According to MEET TAIWAN, MICE activities in Taiwan were attended by a total of 202,000 foreign participants in 2015, which was a 7% increase from 2014 and 13.5% from 2013. This indicates that MICE participants are increasingly choosing Taiwan as a meeting destination. But what are exactly those five reasons? Let's find out!

1. GENEROUS GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES FOR INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Generous government subsidies contribute to making Taiwan a smart choice for incentive travel, especially when matched with MEET TAIWAN's one-stop-shopping services, beginning from the venues recommendations, custom-made itineraries, designated account managers, and professional aids to meeting and travel requirements, technology and cloud services, and much more.

2. SOPHISTICATED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS ENABLE EASY TRAVEL

Strategically located at the gateway to Asia, Taiwan is a central transportation hub to many capitals such as Shanghai, Seoul, Tokyo, and Singapore, with flight times ranging between only 2-4 hours. Travelling within Taiwan is also made incredibly easy with smart public transportation systems that include rental bicycles, public buses, railways, Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), and the Taiwan High Speed Rail (THSR), and plentiful taxis. Whatever the method, each option provides fast and convenient mobility whether from the airport to cities and counties and even along the streets of a metropolis, empowering each individual to travel like a local.



400+

THE NUMBER OF MICE-QUALIFIED HOTELS IN TAIWAN

3. BUSINESS AND TEAM BUILDING VENUES ABOUND

Taiwan boasts a lot of MICE facilities for exhibitions and international conferences. Among them, from north to south, let's mention the Taipei International Conference Center (TICC) and Kaohsiung Exhibition Center (KEC). In addition, there are 400+ MICE-qualified hotels with 205 of them featuring seamless technology and technical support to make any business event successful. Business travelers can also experience Taiwan and conduct team building activities with scenic nature retreats and recreational activities. For instance, rafting in Xiuguluan River, cycling at Sun Moon Lake and other popular activities like river trekking, hiking, mountain climbing, and handcraft workshops are effective choices to foster teamwork and cohesiveness.

4. EXPERIENCE TAIWAN'S HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Taiwanese have tuned their characteristics to become an open-minded, passionate, and welcoming people who embrace diversity and culture. From dancing with aboriginals to visiting ornate Buddhist and Taoist temples, and from making local delicacies to sending wishes up on lanterns into the sky, many niche travel agendas can offer memorable and valuable experiences.

5. COMPLETE THE TRIP WITH AMAZING FOOD, RELAXING HOT-SPRINGS, AND STUNNING SCENERY

Taiwan is a foodie paradise with much scenic charm. Exquisite street foods, bubble milk tea, and the gourmet Michelin-starred Din Tai Fung restaurant are on most visitor checklists. Comforting hot-springs on Yangming Mountain or hot baths at Sun Moon Lake can relax nerves and serve as the best ending to any association meeting. 

Taiwan's MICE Promotion Program (MEET TAIWAN)
Organized by
The Bureau of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs
Implemented by
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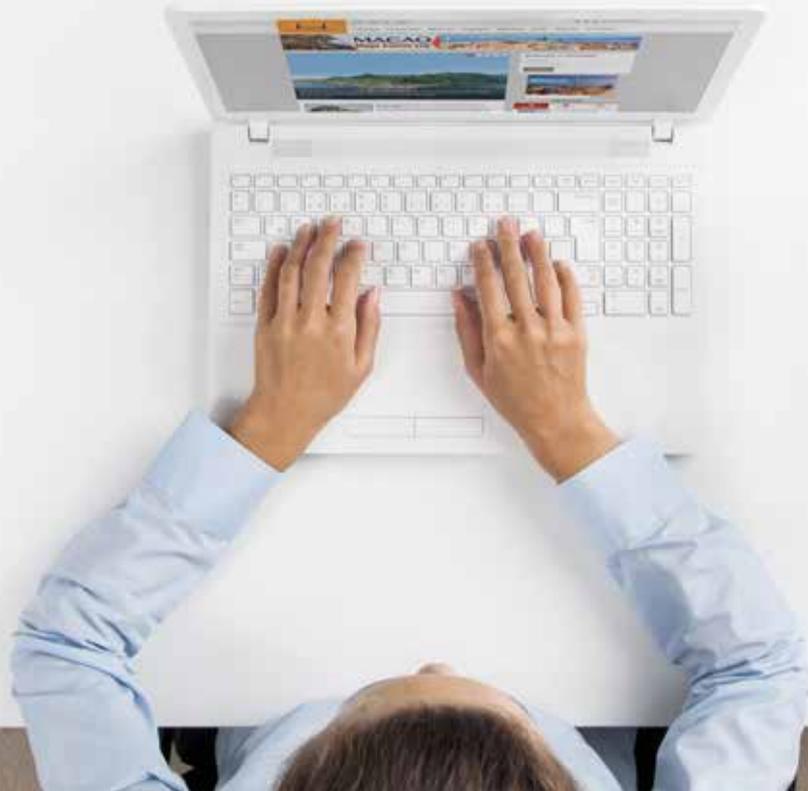
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SWISS CONVENTION CENTRES

SWITZERLAND IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS SPOTLIGHT

There are numerous positive factors in Switzerland's favour as a destination for international congresses. In this regard, the ten most important and largest congress centres are marketed jointly under the label of Swiss Convention Centres, thus making an important contribution to promoting Switzerland's image abroad.

It might be the world-famous institutions of science and research, the economic stability or the country's high standard of safety and security – but all in all, Switzerland is very popular as a destination for international events. In order to make sure that, collectively, these strengths are firmly rooted in the minds of meeting planners, ten Swiss congress centres have joined forces under the motto "United We Stand" and already been harvesting the fruits of working together.

- Congress Center Basel
- Kongress + Kursaal Bern AG
- Davos Congress
- Centre International de Conférences Genève
- Congress Centre Kursaal Interlaken
- SwissTech Convention Center Lausanne
- Palazzo dei Congressi Lugano
- KKL Luzern
- Montreux Music & Convention Centre
- Kongresshaus Zurich

All of these conference centres offer an exhibition area of at least 1,000 sqm and they can all easily accommodate 1,000 participants (some even up to 5,000).

SAFETY, SCIENCE AND SHORT DISTANCES

Switzerland is considered amongst the safest, most secure and economically most stable countries in Europe. The organisers of major political events appreciate the Confederation's political neutrality. In recent years, Switzerland staged numerous high-level political events, such as the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel in 2014 or the IRAN Talks in Geneva, Lausanne and Montreux between 2013 and 2015.



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Switzerland is also one of the world's leading research locations. Internationally renowned institutes such as CERN in Geneva and the Tropical and Public Health Institute in Basel, are at home here, and the Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne rank amongst the twenty best universities in the world. It thus comes as no surprise that, last year, such a preeminent scientific congress as the first World Pancreas Forum should be held in Switzerland. This year too, other heavy-weight conferences are already planned, such as the Congress of the European Cystic Fibrosis Society and the 10th European Conference on Antennas and Propagation, each with more than 1,500 participants.

Switzerland has a particularly finely meshed public transport and road system, and travel times are minimal between the most important cities. It takes around an hour by either rail or road to travel from Zurich (its airport is rated as one of the five best in the world) to the federal capital of Bern, which is roughly the same as getting from Gatwick airport to the centre of London. The Mobility Ticket, which guests staying overnight receive in most of the locations, entitles them to use public transport free of charge. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SWITZERLAND AND SCC

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 MEETINGS



DUBAI BECOMING A SMART CITY

Building up a knowledge economy and reducing their reliance on oil and gas is one of the aims for the UAE, as they embark on a journey and start investing heavily in ICT. In Dubai, the Dubai Smart City initiative has been launched to transform the emirate into a leading global smart city over the next few years. Rémi Dévé writes

The ability to manage rapid urbanization is critical. Cities must increase the efficiency of existing and new infrastructure and services to a level never previously achieved. This requires a step change in the integration of infrastructure management and operations. Today, the quality of life of city residents is influenced by the degree of smartness and user-friendliness of the various services that a city provides. Technology plays a major role in achieving this smartness and efficiency.

HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE

As smartphones become more ubiquitous and technology rapidly changes one's lives, Dubai is marching towards the next level of improvement and embracing a higher quality of life. The smart city project has been conceptualized under the

leadership of His Highness Shaikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and General Supervisor of the Dubai smart city project.

Dubai's smart city strategy includes over 100 initiatives and a plan to transform 1,000 government services into smart services. The project aims to encourage collaboration between the public and private sectors to achieve targets in six 'smart' focus areas: smart life, smart transportation, smart society, smart economy, smart governance and smart environment. The strategy relies on three basic principles: communication, integration and cooperation.

100

THE NUMBER OF INITIATIVES
INCLUDED IN DUBAI'S SMART
CITY STRATEGY

UNPRECEDENTED PARTNERSHIP

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai put it like this: "Our country is today ushering into a new era for the improvement and development of quality of life through this gigantic project which got underway through an unprecedented public-private partnership to make a new reality for all and change the concept of city which the human being lives in so as to live with him through his smart phone and who will be its key pivot."

Dubai's initiatives will embrace innovation, and make the city more efficient, seamless, safe, as well as it will deliver an enriched city experience through smart technology. Everything will be brought together on a single connected, integrated and collaborative smart city platform, with input from the government agencies, businesses and Dubai's citizens. 

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