



THE ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

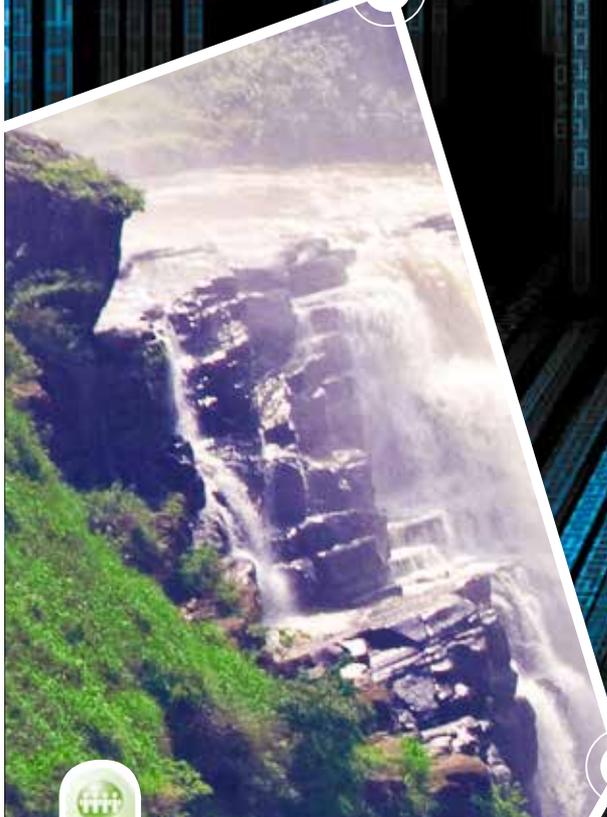
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LUXEMBOURG ON THE MOVE

If, up until now, I had known Luxembourg more from a personal point of view, I had the pleasure earlier in June to discover what makes the meetings industry of this small country so dynamic. As one of Europe's best-kept secrets -most people only see it as a financial haven- Luxembourg has a lot more to offer than just a place for bankers and diplomats, and the current government has clearly understood this, strongly supporting initiatives to make the destination one of choice for association planners. Rémi Dévé reports

A country full of attractions and contrasts, where tradition and modernity coincide harmoniously, Luxembourg is well connected to the major European cities and hubs, whether by car, train or plane. Located at the crossroads between Belgium, France and Germany, the country boasts a trilingual and multicultural population of more than 500,000, and has historically been open to the world. As you would expect English is widely spoken - making business and meetings smooth and easy, with the locals always friendly and eager to help.

FULL OF CONTRASTS

For Luxembourg, being small is actually an asset as you can get the whole "country" experience in a short amount of time. As pressure is getting stronger and stronger for delegates to use their time wisely when out of the office, this is definitely an add-on. Anne Hoffman, CEO of Luxembourg for Tourism, explains: "Luxembourg is one of the few European countries to present and foster the human dimension. This means all its hotels, its tourism and business infrastructure are within easy reach, which represents a major advantage for MICE organisers: the costs and loss of time associated with lengthy journeys are not on the Luxembourg agenda and delegates can make the most of their stay when meeting here."

Due to a certain skill to regenerate over the last decades, Luxembourg prospers today from the talent of its people, their ability to innovate. The purpose of my trip was indeed to find out how much the country is moving forward. If modern

and well-equipped conference infrastructure to suit your requirements are to be found all over Luxembourg, there's always a new addition or a new expansion/renovation to its already diversified meetings portfolio to be discovered. One popular site for events downtown Luxembourg is the bock casemates inside the city's fortifications, with old stone walls and deep rocky caverns - perfect for cocktails or gatherings for up to 100. On a side note, in order to meet the growing demand for overnight stays, the country is also constantly looking for new investors in the hotel industry.

But for Tom Bellion, director of Luxembourg City Tourist Office & Luxembourg Convention Bureau, meetings are also more than just about renting space in a conference centre or booking rooms in a hotel: "We always talk about the financial impact meetings can have on a destination or what legacy they can leave. But MICE goes beyond this. In Luxembourg we see it as a getaway for future investments. Our government has clearly understood this aspect and supports our efforts to attract more European and international associations."

MEETINGS AT THEIR BEST

It's obvious when you drive around Luxembourg: many projects are underway throughout the city and beyond, from venue extensions to hotel renovations to the construction of a new line of tram or a new high-end hotel next to the airport. This upgrade is a testament to Luxembourg becoming a serious contender in the MICE industry, with a wide range of meeting options to be found all over. >



ANNE
HOFFMAN



TOM
BELLION





Rockhal, Belval



Neimënster

▷

Opened in 2012, the **European Convention Centre Luxembourg** (ECCL), with a total of 80,000 m² of usable space, boasts over 30 breakout rooms and 2,600 m² exhibition space. As part of a new "joint venture" concept, ECCL is well connected with nearby attractions such as the Philharmonie Concert Hall, and MUDAM (the Museum of Modern Art), and part of the aptly-named Place de l'Europe Convention Park, with 600 hotel rooms within walking distance and more to come in the near future – but shh it's a secret! What I personally liked and what Patrick Hoffnung, Managing Director, emphasized greatly is the different atmospheres you can create in the distinct, separate sections of the venue – a definite add-on. "The ECCL is closed for 3 months each year for EU related activity. Outside of these times, however, it offers a compelling solution for association conferences for up to 800 attendees, the capacity of its main auditorium. And Luxembourg's presidency of the European Union, which concluded in December 2015, it helped put Luxembourg on the map as never before." said Patrick Hoffnung. (www.luxcongress.lu)

Historically an iconic venue for trade shows, **Luxexpo** has been undergoing a massive revamp, which was on the verge of being finished when I visited the premises. Whatever you want to call it – a renovation, a rejuvenation – most of the venue layout has been rethought, with the recreation of the exhibition halls, the upgrading of the conference space and logistics (two separate entrances instead of one), and the improvement of public access and parking facilities, for a total of 35,000 m² of usable and very flexible space. Luxexpo is located 7km

from the airport and 5km from the city centre, and is set to become of the most versatile venues in Luxembourg. (www.luxexpo.lu)

In the UNESCO-listed historic old town of Luxembourg City, formerly known as the "Gibraltar of the North", lies the beautifully restored **Neimënster**, a former Benedictine Abbey, which was also once a prison! It was inaugurated as a culture, meeting and event centre in 2004, and, within its 12,000 m², about 700 events are organised every year. The site is open to all and looks to be a place of exchange by allowing "the dialogue of cultures and the culture of dialogue". In terms of conference space, Neimënster can accommodate a crowd of 500. Open air events there are quite popular, I must say. (www.neimenster.lu)

If you'd like to give your meeting a musical twist, I suggest you went for the **Rockhal**. Located in the southern industrial city of Belval, it is screaming with rock-star glam as a popular venue for concerts, up to 6,000 people or events - the "Aquarium" is perfect for exclusive receptions for up to 150 people, but the other areas are available as well. And what a backdrop from the foyer! The neighborhood was once best known for its steel production and they have kept the plant in its original, glorious condition. The area also features shopping complex and the science faculty of the University of Luxembourg. (www.rockhal.lu)

MORE INFO
VISITLUXEMBOURG.COM

A CLUSTER MICE FOR LUXEMBOURG

Almost two years ago, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg launched an ambitious cluster project called CML (Cluster MICE Luxembourg), in which 25 organisations, including hotels, venues, transport companies and local DMC/PCO, joined forces to promote the country's meetings industry. The goal is clear: to federate and coordinate all partners' expertise and know-how regarding the MICE segment, to better contribute to a common national strategy or improve the visibility of Luxembourg as a destination.

FAST FACTS FOR ASSOCIATION PLANNERS

LUXEMBOURG CITY
ideal for mi-range association conferences, up to 700 participants

HOTELS
36 and about 3,600 rooms, mostly in the four- and five-star category

CONFERENCE VENUES
108 (including hotels)

GETTING THERE
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CLUSTER MICE LUXEMBOURG

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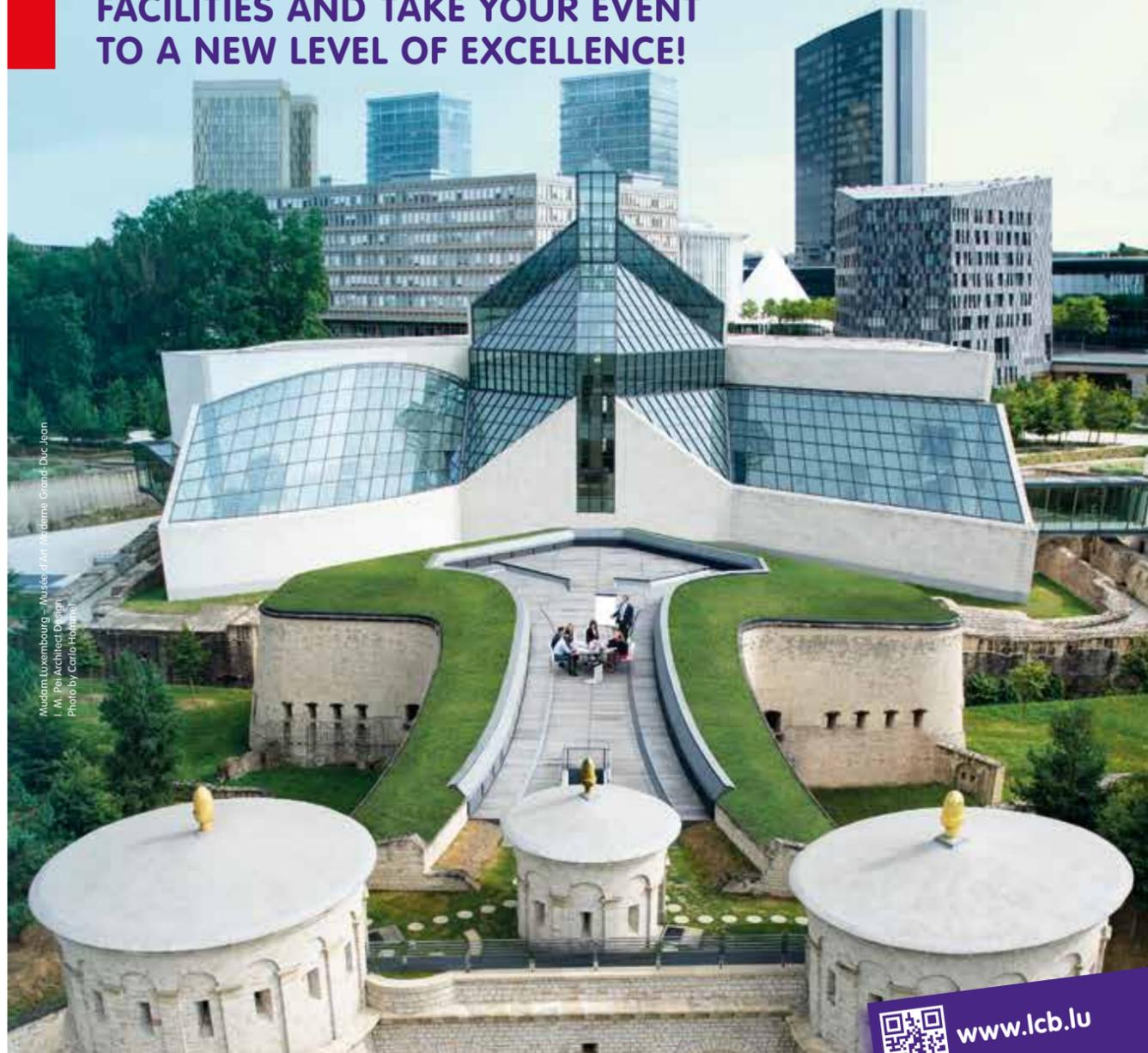
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UP NORTH AND HOSPITABLE

Despite its small size, Luxembourg features an amazing variety of hotels (about 3,600 hotels rooms, mostly in the four-and five-star category) and venues in unique settings. During my way too short visit, I also had the opportunity to visit the northern part of the country, which has nothing to blush about when it comes to meetings.

Some of the hotels in Luxembourg are newly renovated or refurbished to cope with an increasingly savvy clientele. Recently, **Le Royal Luxembourg**, part of the "Leading Hotels of the World", opened its doors to a brand-new accommodation experience. Within walking distance to all the sights, it might be the only kind of its category in the city. 170 renovated rooms, a Piano Bar with a contemporary design enhanced by original lights and music and the new restaurant Amélys make the property worth discovering. In terms of meetings, facilities hosting up to 1000 people are available, covering 900 m² of space.

ALL-AROUND ACCOMMODATION

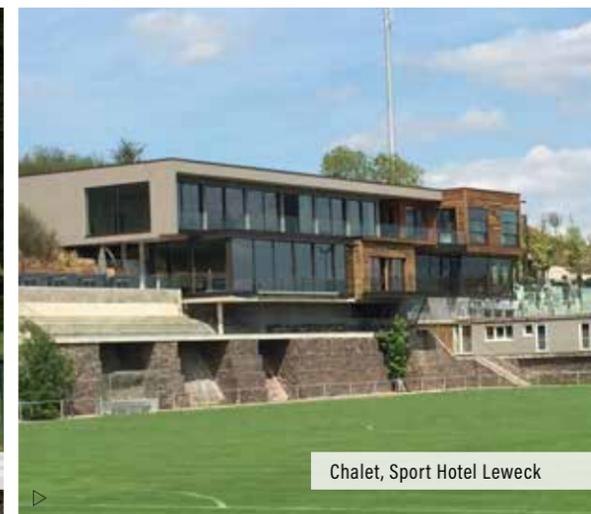
Located on the edge of the forest just a short drive from Luxembourg, **Parc-Hotel Alvisse**, a four-star hotel, is your straight-forward business hotel and a local favourite because of its open-to-public swimming pool. 320 well-appointed rooms with

parking space for 400 cars make it a convenient spot for conferences for up to 1,500 guests. The hotel also had a recent makeover with refurbished rooms, indoor pool and spa facilities.

A short drive from Luxembourg City and nestled in a beautiful greenery setting, **Mondorf Parc Hotel** was designed as a haven for spa lovers, with many old thermal baths occupying a 100-acre private estate, all refined and elegant, where you can relax after a hard day's work at a conference. The 108 newly renovated rooms feature a warm earthy-toned décor, while meeting facilities include 15 flexible function rooms all filled with natural daylight, for up to 350 delegates, and even more should you want to use the many outside lawns Mondorf boasts. I personally liked L'Orangerie, an elegant venue facing a lushly landscaped French garden, perfect for cocktails and banquets alike.



Parc-Hotel Alvisse



Chalet, Sport Hotel Leweck



Chateau d'Urspelt



'Rent-A-City' in Clervaux

Orangerie, Mondorf
Domaine Thermal

© mondorf.lu



The Family of Man, Clervaux

Marco Kany © ONT

This synergy enables Clervaux to unite all participants to professionally and efficiently organise activities or events in just one single place with just one single contact person. 

UP THERE

As we drove up north away from the capital city, I realised how much Luxembourg has to offer thanks to its compact size and ease of access, beyond the scenic landscapes, the meandering rivers and the meadows and forests. It seems indeed so easy to gather in the city during the day and wander off to the country for a social function at night. This combination makes the Luxembourg experience very unique.

Situated in the heart of the Oesling in a beautiful landscape, **Sport Hotel Leweck** effortlessly combines business, comfort, wellness and gastronomy in pure nature. With 51 rooms and suites as well as a large wellness and sport area with an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, different saunas and sport facilities, it's the perfect place for residential meetings, with a 'retreat' aspect. Available function rooms are aplenty, from the Château and the Jardin, up to 150 people standing, to the Chalet, my personal favorite because of the view, which easily accommodates 400. The large park and the various facilities are perfect for team-building activities – should you want to give a hands-on experience to your participants!

A bit further north lies the sparkling **Château d'Urspelt**, a family-owned hotel set in a 300-year-old castle. Now boasting 55 guest rooms all designed in contemporary yet classical style, the property has recently almost doubled its number of rooms, with a new extension that is so well-done you think it's been there the whole time! There is even a rooftop "infinity spa" and social functions in the elegant interior courtyard are a must. An eclectic choice of venues is for hire, including meeting rooms and a large reception hall for up to 500 people.

Last but definitely not least, I was made familiar with the original 'Rent-A-City' concept of the small but innovative city of Clervaux. As the name indicates, it gives the opportunity to rent an entire city for a breathtaking event for a few hundreds of people. The street become yours and instead of hosting your event in a traditional indoor location, you can customise your event in an outdoor setting. In collaboration with the town's mayor, local representatives and other organisations, the **Le Clervaux Boutique & Design Hotel** and the **Hotel International** came up with the idea so as to make the most of the city's attractions.

CASE STUDY

7TH INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE CONFERENCE

Around 400 policymakers, regulators and insurers from over 40 different countries around the world gathered at the Conference Centre Kirchberg in May 2015 for Insurance Europe's 7th International Insurance Conference.

Insurance Europe is the European insurance and reinsurance federation. Through its 34 member bodies, the national insurance associations, Insurance Europe represents all types of insurance and reinsurance undertakings, eg pan-European companies, monoliners, mutuals and SMEs.

Globalization of the insurance industry - this was the key topic which was on European insurers' agenda at their biggest annual conference organised in Luxembourg in the presence of HRH Prince Guillaume of Luxembourg. Sergio Balbinot, President of Insurance Europe emphasised on the role of the insurance industry: *"Given challenges society faces, as a tool to provide stability & growth, insurance is more relevant than ever. Regulation should see insurance as part of the solution, but sometimes it seems like it views it as part of the problem."*

The challenges of international regulation, its enforcement, coherence and effectiveness were not the only topics discussed during the event. The debates also focused on the opportunities and challenges that the insurance industry faces from globalisation, the global insurance protection gap and how the insurance industry can make the most of smart technology.

Luxembourg Finance Minister, HE Pierre Gramegna, discussed the importance of insurers in Europe in general and in Luxembourg in particular. He also pointed out the importance of the European insurance industry as long-term investors. 



PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNITED IN MARRIAGE?

MARCEL A.M. VISSERS EDITOR IN CHIEF

Today the term 'hybrid' is used in many disciplines. It has started to appear when talking about technology (as in hybrid technology) but lately even when describing societal behaviour (like in hybrid meetings). Furthermore, there is a tendency to refer to 'hybrid' as if it were a phenomenon at the origin of new technologies.

Meanwhile I have grown accustomed to the 'concept' and I have discovered that there are many different types of hybrid conferences relying on revolutionary digital techniques. Even a new market segment has emerged with smart marketers proclaiming that 'the hybrid event' is about to conquer the world because it is capable of combining physical and digital components. It seems our world has become too complex to continue with traditional style - i.e. physical - meetings. Personally, I very much doubt this. Maybe it can become an instrument to complement what we do today. After all, one of the big advantages of a hybrid conference is that it keeps the budget in check and reduces the carbon footprint.

I can't say when exactly the term 'hybrid' was used for the first time in the meeting industry and by whom. However, it is not mentioned in IAPCO's dictionary of Meeting Industry Terminology (2000 edition). So I guess it must be more recent than that. I ended up talking to Gerrit Heijkoop, a Dutch industry expert, who refers to himself as an entrepreneur with a passion for technology, event organisation and inspiring other people. His experience with combining physical and online target groups dates back to 2009. Could that have been the starting point for the phenomenon?

I particularly enjoyed one of his conclusions in which he cites Neville Medhora, whom he refers to as his colleague and his hero: "When Lazy Louis stays at home logging in to every online session and making copious notes, he will probably collect a lot of good and useful information. When Friendly Frederic attends a conference he might miss a few sessions because of his hangover of the night before but he will probably benefit more from the overall experience than Lazy Louis because he met new people, made new friends, had breakfast, lunch or dinner with other nerds and in the process expanded his network of likeminded professionals".

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CONTENTS

DESTINATION FEATURE

02 / Luxembourg

FOR THE MATTER

14 / On the Radar

16 / Association Portrait

18 / Europe for Sports Events

21 / Association Insights

22 / Sustainability

24 / EXPO 2017 Astana

25 / ESAE

TRENDS

31 / UIA 2015 stats

IN THE WORLD

33 / Dubai

35 / Jeju

36 / Korea

39 / Basel

40 / Australia

42 / Ireland

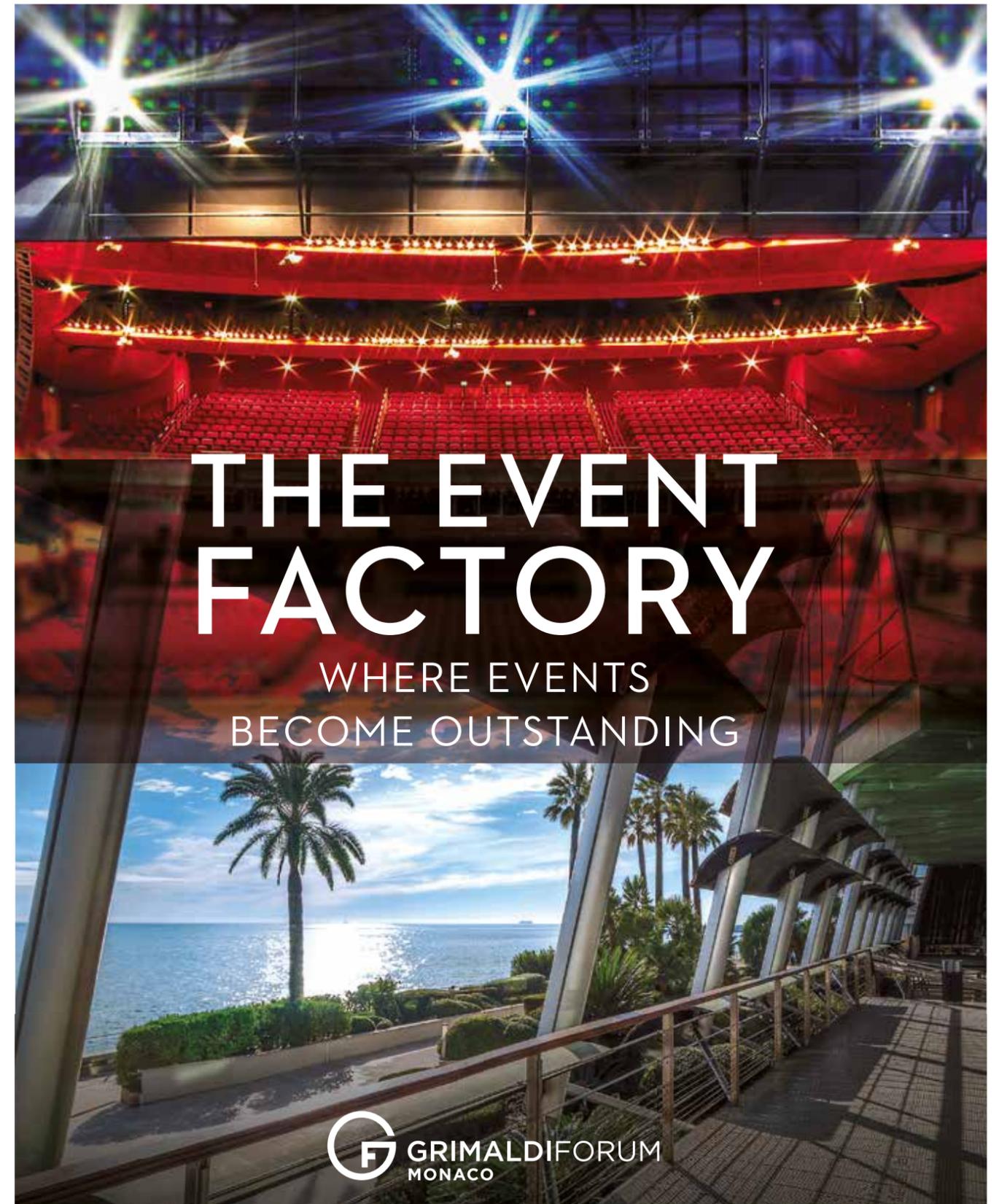
43 / Taiwan

45 / Hangzhou

CONFERENCES & FAIRS

46 / AIPC in Nantes

49 / ibtm world



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WHERE EVENTS
BECOME OUTSTANDING

 GRIMALDIFORUM
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HQ

Editor in Chief
Marcel A.M. Visiers
T. +32 (0)3 226 88 81
marcel@meetingmediagroup.com

Managing Editor
Rémi Dévé
T. +32 (0)2 761 70 55
remi@meetingmediagroup.com

Managing Director
Cécile Koch
T. +32 (0)2 761 70 52
cecile@meetingmediagroup.com

International Sales
Asia Pacific, Middle East, Eastern Europe
Vivian Xu
T. +32 (0)2 761 70 53
vivian@meetingmediagroup.com

Africa, Latin America, Southern Europe
Jesús Guerrero Chacón
T. +32 (0)2 761 70 54
jesus@meetingmediagroup.com

Worldwide network of representatives
Inquiries: sales@meetingmediagroup.com

Finance & Accounting
T. +32 (0)3 226 88 81
finance@meetingmediagroup.com

Editor
Lane Nieset

Design & Print
Paf!
T. +32 (0)2 743 47 28
info@pafdesign.be

Meeting Media Group
4 avenue des Prisonniers Politiques
1150 Brussels (Belgium)
T. +32 (0)2 761 70 50
F. +32 (0)2 761 70 51
www.meetingmediagroup.com
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1

RWANDA SUCCESSFULLY HOSTS AU SUMMIT AND CALLS FOR GREATER AFRICAN UNITY

A rousing call for pan-African unity, solidarity and equality rang throughout the 27th African Union (AU) summit, which took place at the newly launched Kigali Convention Centre on July 10-18, 2016, and echoed the shared ambitions of its 54 member states to work together for greater trade, interaction and long-term prosperity in Africa. Tagged as "a global strategy to optimise the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans," the Agenda 2063 programme was also specified, aiming for unity, prosperity and peace throughout the continent over the next half century by learning from lessons of its past, building on the progress it now has under way, and strategically exploiting all possible opportunities available to it.

WWW.RWANDAConventionBUREAU.RW

4

APFAO IS BORN

The Asia-Pacific Federation of Association Organizations (APFAO) is a regional network of national membership organizations of associations advocating towards the betterment of the sector and professionals working in these associations. The APFAO was launched after the signing of the 'Hong Kong Charter' of four founding members on March 24, 2015 at the side lines of the inaugural "Great Ideas Asia-Pacific Conference" of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). The four APFAO founders are the Associations Forum (AF), the Australasian Society of Association Executives (AuSAE), the Korean Society of Association Executives (KSAE) and the Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCAA) which initiated the APFAO and serves as interim Secretariat.

WWW.APFAO.ORG

2

INTRODUCING STAVANGER

With 127,000 inhabitants and about 10,000 conference chairs, Stavanger is one of Norway's largest cities. The centre of the Norwegian oil, gas and energy industry, it is also a university city, and home to a number of institutions of higher education and research such as the International Research Institute of Stavanger. Stavanger has around 30 conference centres and hotels, and one of Norway's main conference and exhibition centres is located here. The maximum capacity is 5,000. One of the most famous natural attractions in the region is the impressive cliff Preikestolen (the Pulpit Rock), which towers 604 metres over the Lysefjord, the perfect outing for a pre- or post-conference tour.

WWW.RegionSTAVANGER.COM/EN/STAVANGER-CONVENTION-BUREAU

5

UNEDESTINOS UNITES BRAZILIAN CONVENTION BUREAUX

Although the immense size of Brazil might suggest that its states adopt an independent stance and become involved with strategic actions that only serve regional peculiarities, Unedestinos (National Union of Convention Bureaux and Destination Entities) took advantage of the very diversity of cultures and business possibilities to encourage union and a shared vision of how to market destinations and come up with initiatives that can be replicated, encouraged and expanded to include other markets. Unedestinos currently comprises 40 CVBs that last year alone supported and secured more than five thousand events for its destinations, representing approximately 3,000 associate companies that are responsible for 110,000 direct jobs in the tourism, travel and events' production chain.

WWW.UNEDESTINOS.COM.BR

3

IMEX AMERICA REVAMPS ITS ASSOCIATION PROGRAMME

IMEX America has completely reimagined the 2016 programme and format of Association Focus, its education and networking event for association professionals. John H. Graham, CEO and president of ASAE, chairs the new Leadership Stream, which is set to tackle the long-term strategic issues currently dominating the minds and plans of the association C-suite. Topics will include: the impact of strategic governance on profitability and planning; how to ready a membership organisation for possible cyber-attack, and how to engage with a generationally and geographically diverse membership base. Additionally, Martin Sirk, CEO of ICCA, will lead the new Association Meetings and Events stream, where the spotlight falls on the tactical and managerial challenges facing association meeting and event planners.

WWW.IMEXAMERICA.COM

6

THAILAND STRENGTHENS ITS MICE LEADERSHIP POSITION

Thailand Convention Bureau & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has taken a step forward in strengthening its position as a hub for business events in Asia by prominently featuring Chiang Rai – the Northernmost Province of Thailand, the origin of Lanna Culture and gateway to greater Mekong sub-region. The Province is strategically located in the Golden Triangle area, enabling business events' travelers to conveniently connect to the neighboring countries of Laos, Myanmar and China. Some of the Royal facilities in Chiang Rai have become the perfect venues for MICE activities, giving unique insight into the history of the destination and the local grassroots Thai communities.

WWW.BUSINESSEVENTSTHAILAND.COM



APFAO - Signing of the 'Hong Kong Charter'



Chang Rai

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

ENCOURAGING KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialised agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs). Philipp Steiner, Meetings Logistics Coordinator, explains how the organisation operates and the issues they have to deal with. Interview Rémi Dévé



PHILIPP STEINER

Could you please present the International Telecommunication Union?

ITU was established in 1865 to meet the need for technical standards for international telegraph systems. From the day of the telegraph, through its formative role in telecommunications, and in today's converged ICT ecosystem, ITU has offered a neutral platform to broker consensus on technical and policy considerations crucial to the development of the global ICT ecosystem.

Our smartphones operate in frequency ranges allocated by ITU. Without ITU's international standards, we would not be able to make phone calls or access the Internet. And we complement

our technical work with capacity-building in the application of advanced ICTs.

ITU is unique among UN agencies in having both public and private-sector membership. Supported by a secretariat based in Geneva, ITU's membership-driven work is carried out by 193 Member States, as well as over 800 private-sector players and academic and research institutes.

One of your goals is to "connect all the world's people" - how do you achieve this?

A fundamental part of our mission as an organisation is to encourage knowledge and technology transfer between developed and developing countries. As such, we complement our technical work with capacity-building in the application of advanced ICTs within enabling policy and regulatory frameworks.

We also make great effort to increase developing countries' participation in our technical work, with a prime example found in our "Bridging the Standardisation Gap" (BSG) programme, which seeks to narrow the historical disparity between developed and developing countries' ability to influence and benefit from international standardisation.

The BSG programme enables the provision of services including fellowships that offer financial assistance to delegates from certain developing countries; a mentorship programme for newcomers to learn from experienced delegates; assistance to developing countries in their establishment of national standardisation secretariats; and hands-on training to delegates from developing countries on effective participation in ITU's standardisation expert groups.

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

Cost-cutting among our members has been the biggest hurdle to overcome in recent years as travel budgets have been cut significantly. We have responded by providing state-of-the-art online "remote participation" tools. This not only benefits those who have trouble obtaining travel permission but it is also a valuable service to our developing-country members, helping them to avoid costly airfares and travel expenses.

We see ITU organises many different kinds of events - can you explain?

ITU's work is membership-driven, with the result that participation in many of our events is a membership privilege. The motivation to become

an ITU member generally results from a desire to influence the proceedings of ITU's decision-making meetings.

We maintain a variety of other platforms to ensure that non-members of ITU have opportunity to influence our work, with an example provided by the "Focus Groups" of ITU's standardisation arm. Open-to-all Focus Groups are established to help ITU respond rapidly to emerging standardisation demands. These groups undertake preliminary research into these demands to provide a basis for subsequent standardisation work in our membership-driven "ITU-T Study Groups".

ITU workshops and symposia are other important supplements to our decision-making meetings. These events are open to all, allowing us to introduce ITU's work to a wider audience, and, by collecting the views of a broad range of stakeholders, these events assist us in ensuring that ITU's work addresses the needs of as many stakeholders as possible.

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

ITU organises events all around the world and the selection of the venue is membership-driven. ITU's government or industry members will make

Cost-cutting among our members has been the biggest hurdle to overcome in recent years as travel budgets have been cut significantly

a formal request to ITU offering to host a particular event. In most cases, the ITU secretariat bears responsibility to accept or decline such invitations, however, for major ITU governing conferences, the ITU membership bears this responsibility. One example of an ITU governing conference is the World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA), which will be held later this year in Hammamet, Tunisia, from 25 October to 3 November. WTSA meets every four years to decide the strategic direction and structure of ITU's standardization arm.

What is your most memorable event so far and why?

Each year we organise the "Future Networked Car" symposium within the Geneva International Motor Show, and this always proves to be a very exciting event. The symposium attracts a unique mix of participants to discuss the latest developments at the intersection of automobiles and ICT. Automated

(self-driving), connected cars are becoming a reality, and the Geneva Motor Show offers us a high-profile media setting to debate issues around the future of transport.

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

As the UN specialised agency for ICTs, we have the expertise to support our membership's work with state-of-the-art conference technology. Online remote participation has become a core component of most of our events, and this service is not without risks as we need to have a good handle on quality of experience and cybersecurity to ensure smooth operations. We offer a wide range of other electronic tools to assist the exchange of information between our secretariat and membership, and between members themselves, to ensure that our work keeps pace with the highly dynamic ICT sector. 

MORE INFORMATION
WWW.ITU.INT



WTSA 2012 reception



Future Networked Car Event

EUROPE TEAMS TOGETHER FOR SPORTS EVENTS

When London & Partners coordinated weekend-long 2014 RideLondon, a high-profile cycling event, they not only saw an economic impact upward of £15 million, the city was also able to reach a media audience of over 95 million. In addition to 73 hours of media exposure shining a spotlight on London and the event, more than half of RideLondon's spectators said they were more motivated to cycle for leisure from watching these celebrated cyclers hitting the city's streets in person. Lane Nieset writes

Case studies like this one are just one of the tools the newly formed international association of event hosts (eventhosts.org) is hoping to share by collaborating as a group when it comes to hosting sports events around the globe. The idea formed this spring in Lausanne during the City-to-City session at the SportAccord Convention, with more than 50 cities, regions and countries agreeing to come together to

share knowledge and experience when bidding and planning international sports events.

"We want it to be something that is genuinely representative of communities around the world, so we don't just want to be something that's for people who have hosted the Olympic games like London has in the past," explains Iain Edmondson, Head of Major Events

at London & Partners, one of the members of the new group. "We want to give a clear message that we're open for business for as many different cities and countries as possible, and therefore become more powerful in our voice saying that events are great if they're thoughtfully delivered in a way that gives a real return to local communities that helped make them happen."



IMPACTS OF FORMING THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVENT HOSTS

Headquarters caught up with one of the group's members, Paul Bush OBE, EventScotland's Director of Events, to hear first-hand how the organisation will directly impact both the economy and events industry in Europe.

What are some of the benefits you're hoping to see from working together as a group?

I think the most important benefit is the fact that we've got a group of people talking together. That might not sound very meaningful, but if I were to wind the clock back 10 years, it was considered to be quite a competitive industry, and it still is because we all compete against each other to win events. The fact that these guys are preparing to share best practice is something we've never had in this industry before.

Is there anything else you're striving for when it comes to event tourism efforts as a whole across Europe?

I see that we'll be able to get consistency and unity in terms of impacts around events, whether they'll be hard or soft. Most of the world (apart from North America) is driven by government sectors. Governments or cities are the big investors in events, so you're looking at gross value added or that it can create full-time equivalent jobs.

What are some of the challenges you're hoping to tackle or overcome as a group?

Hopefully stop rights fees being hyped disproportionately so that only certain parts of the world with lots of money can actually aspire to bid in the future. There is a challenge in that area that we have to face head-on that some rights holders have disproportionately increased their rights fees against the value of their properties.

What are you anticipating as far as long-term impacts of the collaboration?

Initially we see a share in best practice and we don't see it as a formalised group, as a constituted body, and I don't think we need that. As soon as you go down that route, sometimes it becomes much more difficult to actually achieve what you want to achieve. The collegiate nature of the group is actually more important. 



IAIN EDMONDSON



PAUL BUSH

Event tourism can add tangible value to the places where they're held, whether it be through volunteering efforts or coaching development

THREE STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SPORTS TOURISM

1. Recognise Events' Real Value

Event tourism can add tangible value to the places where they're held, whether it be through volunteering efforts or coaching development and by measuring this, hosts can anticipate how great an event's return may be. "There's a much greater acceptance that events drive benefits across the whole 360-degree arena of most government portfolios, so for the first time ever, we've gotten acceptance that event tourism is part of a core proposition for a secure country," Paul Bush OBE explains. "Event tourism is a major player now in most countries' economic sustainability. This is an industry that governments look to quite importantly particularly as many countries have moved from manufacturing industry bases to service sector bases."

2. Share Best Practices

In an industry where even cities in the same country may be competing against one another to win bids, one of the most important challenges is to set aside this naturally competitive nature and work together as a team to share best practices. Look at it as a transfer of knowledge, where host cities can gain information from previous hosts on ways to improve and plan a successful event.

3. Offer Support for Newer Hosts

By providing resources and training for first-time hosts of large-scale events, or for those who haven't put on an event of this size in a number of years, the event's success level will dramatically improve and offer a greater return both for the community as well as the rest of Europe. These events can build on similar previous ones, learning and growing from past experiences to widen the net.



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TURN YOUR VIRTUAL EVENTS INTO VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES

I really can't count the number of association and destination meetings, conferences, trade shows, and other events I've attended in my years as an association executive and speaker. I know it's in thousands. For the first half of my career that was how you "interacted" with your members and your clients.



In today's marketplace, everything is moving toward "virtual" this and "hybrid" that, trying to use technology to fill the gap between people's desire to be part of these events without the hassle of actually having to BE there. They perceive that they have too little time, too much information, see too little in the event brochure to justify the cost and inconvenience of travel, etc. So the meetings and association communities say, "All right, if they won't come to our event we'll bring our event to them."

Here's the problem: we (the meetings industry) are trying to create the wrong thing. You call them events, or conventions, or trade shows or congresses, etc., but that's not what they are. They never were. If they were successful, they were never really meetings – they were *experiences*. Sure, people remember good speakers or fun social events, but mostly they remember the sum total of their experience. Being physically there provided all the basics and the biggest **plus** – live interaction!

Can a virtual meeting or hybrid event capture that experience? Probably not exactly, because people pick and choose what parts of a virtual event they virtually want to be part of. It's different than being there. So, to have successful virtual events, you need to focus on what you can do to create a virtual *experience*.

Here are three keys to doing that:

1. Turn the "virtual" part into a benefit
Be sure to point out exactly *how* you are putting on this virtual event. Make the technology and the communications you are using a learning point for the attendees. Sprinkle lots of "Want to see how your organization can do this for your members?" opportunities throughout, with links to a short video or explanation of how the technology works and where to get a provider. A lot of people spend time online at these events saying (to themselves, of course, since they aren't there): How did they *do* that? I wonder if it's something my group can do?

2. If you can, let them see themselves being part of the event.
There are several technologies that allow participants to be seen participating, as well as being able to view the program. I did a worldwide virtual leadership program with attendees from 15 countries on five continents. Each of them could be seen via their webcams in small screens surrounding the presentation screen. When one of the participants asked a question, his or her screen jumped to the middle of the screen. In that way, it made the attendees part of the program.

3. Make it interactive, but prepare the attendees
Even with today's advanced technologies, one of the biggest frustrations about attending a virtual event is the fact that it is rare when there are no technical problems. Dropped signals, wrong call-in codes, missed events due to time zone changes, etc. all cause people to lose faith in virtual events. Make sure someone is monitoring this side of things.

4. Personally, I still like going to events and conferences rather than participating online. But the world has changed and we all have to be flexible in how we deliver value to our members and clients.

Just remember that it's not about the technology – it's about the *experience*.



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@balleadership.com / www.balleadership.com)

DIGITAL STRATEGY DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY

Over 7 years ago when the events industry really started to talk about “hybrid meetings”, there was a sense of a huge tsunami of technology that would hit us and destroy the meetings industry as we know. Many feared that hybrid meetings might cannibalise their face-to-face events, with people choosing to attend virtually rather than in person. Others – especially the greenies and the technology geeks proclaimed online events as the future and the way to drastically reduce carbon emissions.



Today those new technologies did catch on, usage is increasing and experience has proved that virtual connections increases face-to-face attendance and plays a very important part in your event sustainability strategy. However, while many associations have incorporated new forms of online technology into their event, only a few are doing a great job at leveraging digital solutions to improve their organisational goals and to drive their sustainable performance.

Most associations exist to serve more than a commercial purpose – most have a clear social and often an environmental mission. A well-implemented hybrid and online strategy delivers the following benefits:

1 Social:

- a. Online integration allows associations to design events that are more inclusive, diverse and accessible. You can include more people who would not have been able to attend the event due to time, geography, accessibility or economic issues.

- b. In this age of hyper transparency and increased regulation, online events allow associations to bring concerned audiences into the “crowd” to observe and take part.

2 Economic:

- a. Hybrid allows for on-demand access of content during and long after the event; dramatically expanding both the life-cycle and reach of your key messages.
- b. During tough economic times sponsors and supporting companies enforce travel restrictions and budget cuts. At these times online content and live broadcasting are an extremely cost and time efficient way to deliver key messages.
- c. Digitising meeting content can also provide a significant new revenue stream. Associations can create different access models for attendees; from remote participation to full conference participation and content access included in the highest fee.

3 Environment

Flights account for a minimum of 70% of carbon emissions from most international conference. Reducing flights is the most effective way to reduce carbon emissions at most conferences. With most events producing a minimum of 3kg of waste per person per day, online events can potentially reduce your waste impact significantly.

In conclusion, tomorrow's most successful associations will be those that engage and activate their target communities by leveraging the exciting synergies between people, technology and face-to-face connections around a clear economic, social and environmental purpose. They will build upon the engaged communities of people that already exist online to develop incredible and sustainable offline events that further drive these communities to engage online and activate their purpose. 

This article is a contribution from Guy Bigwood, MCI Group Sustainability Director. For the last ten years MCI have been consulting and advising on the development and implementation of digital and sustainability strategies for association, destinations, corporations and governments. More info on www.mci-group.com/en/thought_leadership/Making_digital_happen

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EXPO-2017 ASTANA

THE GEOPOLITICS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY AT PLAY

Just under a year from now Kazakhstan will host the World Expo 2017 presenting the theme of "Future Energy", and aiming to foster a debate around the idea of "Solutions for Tackling Humankind's Greatest Challenge."

The logo of the Expo reflects the focus on alternative energy sources: flower petals reminiscent of a wind turbine and arranged in a circle, representing energy and perpetual motion.

The audience that the Expo will gather will include representatives from governments, NGOs, corporates and also the general public. While the Expo will display both innovative and practical energy solutions, the main aim is for the Expo and the delegates to attempt to answer the question of "How do we ensure safe and sustainable access to energy for all while reducing CO₂ emissions?"

Taking place between 10 June and 10 September 2017, the event will mark an important checkpoint between today and the year when the global climate change agreement, COP 21, will come into effect. The event in Astana will also be unique given the tumultuous political and economic climate currently taking shape: a potential global economic downturn and a possible exit of an EU Member State. Astana could very well be witness to a turning point, either a renewed focus on investment in renewables or a doubling down on isolationism.

The European Union and its Member States could be the driver of either scenario.

Until now, the EU as a whole has been leading emissions reduction efforts globally. There is an obvious economic argument for this as today, as the EU imports more than half of all the energy it consumes, costing it more than 1 billion euro per day.

The EU is on track to reach its 2020 targets. By 2014, EU emissions were 24% below 1990 levels, and renewable energy was 15.3% of gross final energy consumption. However, it faces challenges in three intersecting areas: a fall in renewables investments, growing political uncertainty, and a need for greater ambition to reach the COP 21 goals.

European investments into renewables fell by 21% from roughly 55 billion euro in 2014 to 43 billion euro in 2015 – the lowest figure for the past nine years. China on the other hand has increased its investments and become the worldwide front-runner on an absolute basis. At this same time, the EU will be defining its support mechanisms for renewables and the types of targets it wishes to achieve by 2030. The

Expo in Astana will take place just as the EU will be negotiating its own legislative commitments.

Influencing all of this could very well be the uncertainty of the UK's position in our out of the EU. The UK has always been a more "progressive" Member State when it comes to green growth initiatives. Shortly after the UK referendum on Brexit was decided, the UK government reiterated its support for combatting climate change by setting a world-leading target: cutting emissions by 57% by 2032 based on 1990 levels.

From all this uncertainty, Expo 2017 in Astana will come at exactly the right time to define what the future holds for renewable energy, not just at the EU level, but also globally. 

In this third article of our World Expo series, guest contributor Aleš Šinkovec, Practice Director, Energy and Environment, LOGOS Public Affairs, discusses how Expo-2017 Astana is an opportunity for the European Union and its Member States.

VIRTUAL AND HYBRID EVENTS IN THE POST BREXIT AGE

This is an age when multiplatform events and multi-party democracy are taking our world by storm. Virtual communities are with us, and even those of us too old to understand this learned of their impact when we woke up to find that UK voters had decided to exit the EU.

Text Philip Springuel, ESAE President, AssociationExecutives.EU



PHILIP
SPRINGUEL

We have never before seen as many association events being conducted online, in virtual and hybrid dimensions. While video conferencing made forays into the board rooms and working groups of our associations beginning in 2008 to address tough economic conditions, we now see great innovation and much larger numbers of persons interacting in virtual and online formats.

As association executives of European organisations, our role is to lead and support the development of our missions across the European Union and beyond. Many of us therefore view with regret the retreat of the UK from the EU. We'll have to navigate an uncertain political and legal environment in which we'll face new challenges due to instability, and will have to make ever more difficult choices for our organisations in unscripted scenarios. We therefore believe it is important that policymakers offer a rapid and clear path for the future relationship of the EU with the UK.

ESAE's own mission becomes more important than ever. While the UK vote points to a disconnect between traditional political institutions, citizens and their various representative organisations in society,

ESAE will continue working to develop and support professional association executives to better manage these revelations. We expect our members will have many questions and a need for ever more best practice exchanges.

From my personal perspective, having watched the EU come together up close over the last 23 years, I worry about the effect of a UK exit from the EU on many fronts. As I write this column, new UK Prime Minister Theresa May has yet to invoke Article 50 of the EU Treaty that would formally launch the two-year period of separation proceedings. I'm reading about significant portions of EU staff time at the Council, the Commission and Parliament being tasked with Brexit negotiations. What of the other issues that need attention? Will a reinvigorated 'Europe of Regions' appear on the horizon? In what form?

We are in early stages and I can only hope all parties will keep the general interest in mind. In meantime, let's schedule many more virtual and hybrid events, these would not theoretically suffer from post Brexit 'not-so-free movement of people' that we may see in Europe's next iteration. Mine is but a limited view of these very complex issues, do go online to our website, AssociationExecutives.EU, and LinkedIn discussion groups to provide your comments, criticisms, feedback and particular expertise, and stay alert for ESAE's own Peer2Peer session on virtual and hybrid events scheduled for 9 September. See you there! 

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NEW TO ONLINE EVENTS? TIPS FOR SETTING UP A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMME

So you've decided that online events would be a valuable addition to your association's services – but how should you go about implementing it? Online events, or webinars, have become an increasingly important medium for associations that are looking to either complement in-person events or reach wider audiences that are unlikely to attend their conventional events. *Text Markus J.P. Forsberg, Membership Coordinator, International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP)*

However, those who participate in online events have high expectations. Organising engaging and dynamic online events is not necessarily any easier than traditional on-site events – much of the same applies, and both come with their own set of considerations and challenges.

If planned properly and carried out with the right expertise, online events can be a cost-effective means to reach your audience, bring value to members and others, and inspire further engagement. Here we present some of the key considerations to bear in mind when launching a new programme.

PURPOSE

What are you trying to achieve with your online events? While this may seem obvious, many online event programmes suffer from not having examined the reasons why they should organise online events and whether they are using the best medium and format for it.

Some of the more common primary purposes include:

- Timely information dissemination
- Product or service promotion
- Professional education
- Policy debate

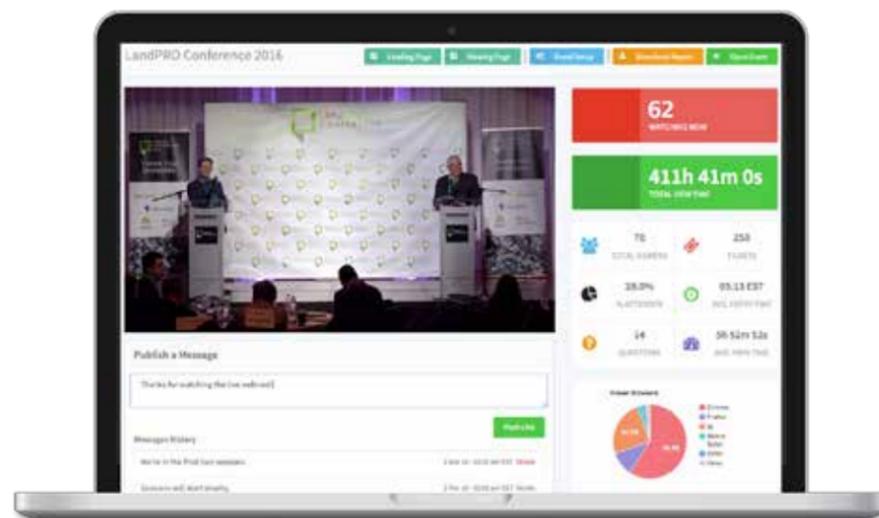
- Peer exchange
- Focus groups and consultation

The purpose needs to be clear from the beginning. Online audiences tend to be more easily distracted (or discouraged) than on-site participants. If they don't feel that the event is delivering on their expectations, they will disengage or even leave.

How you define the purpose should drive many of your decisions regarding event platform, features, level of interactivity, format, and communication.

TARGET AUDIENCE

What does your audience look like? As with any event, you cannot satisfy everyone's needs – but the temptation to be vague about whose needs you



are trying to meet is greater when the direct costs of organising the event are smaller.

A good method is to use "personas" – fictional individual members or other stakeholders – to analyze which components of your network it should appeal to and in what way. If you've already gone through the exercise of creating personas for planning your organisation's overall services, this is a good opportunity to dust them off and re-use them.

The target audience should also determine the options needed for accessing the event. On the technical side, this requires understanding the limitations that participants are likely to face, including Internet connectivity, operating systems, degree to which workplace computers will block specific programs, their preference for traditional phone conferences versus VOIP solutions, whether they will be able to call numbers nationally and internationally, etc. This should help you prioritise among options for phone, audio and video livestreams, and text-based access.

EVENT PLATFORM

Once you know what purpose(s) and who your target audience is, the decision for what event platform to use is an important one. Some guiding questions include:

- Does your target audience already tend to use a particular platform?
- How interactive does it need to be? Modes of interactivity can include live chat, Q&A, poll questions, and even live "call-in."
- How flexible a solution is needed? Some platforms are versatile enough to be suitable for different event formats.
- What functionality do you actually need? Functionality such as break-out rooms and advanced quizzes can be very useful, but is not needed for all use cases.
- How many live participants do you need to accommodate?
- What is your budget?

The three largest platforms for webinars and online events, Cisco WebEx, Citrix GoToMeeting/

GoToWebinar, and Adobe Connect, have very different approaches to online events, even if they can look similar on paper. There is also a large number of smaller (and in many cases cheaper or even free) options out there. It is worth spending some time to compare the options in detail and ideally try out trial or free versions in practice with a focus group.

STAFFING AND ROLES

While it is technically possible to run an online event solo, it is usually not recommended. In general, the more you can divide up responsibilities between different staff members, the better.

The most important role in most events is the host, who often also serves as facilitator of discussion or Q&A. Identifying and preparing a suitable host can make or break an event, as they have the primary responsibility for keeping it dynamic and engaging.

The total number of staff members needed depend on the features you are using for your event, and

your tolerance for things going wrong. At a minimum you would need two people: one for taking care of the technical setup, audio connections, and troubleshooting, and another for hosting. But once you start adding additional features and even basic interactivity, the number of people who should be engaged during the event increases. Make sure you have sufficient capacity to handle issues that inevitably will happen, from dropped audio and video feeds to complete connection breakdowns.

In order to run an event smoothly, keep the following in mind. As a rule of thumb, if two tasks are likely to happen at the same time, they should not be assigned to the same person, regardless of how simple they are. A typical example is changing slides during the event: while it's a very simple task, having to deal with another issue that may arise at the same time can result in unprofessional glitches.

SPEAKING AND PRESENTING

Speaking to an online audience is different from speaking to people face-to-face, especially if a speaker is connecting from a remote location rather

The three largest platforms for webinars and online events, Cisco WebEx, Citrix GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar, and Adobe Connect, have very different approaches to online events

than being in a studio together with the host. Just because someone is a good speaker in front of a conventional audience does not mean that they will automatically perform well online. Make sure to brief speakers well in advance. Consider reviewing existing e-learning resources for effective webinar presentation skills that you can refer speakers to.

Make sure that there is constantly something of visual interest in the presentation, or even better through interactive features. Online events call for more interaction and movement so that you grab and hold the interest of your audience or their email inbox or social media feed will occupy them instead.

If you are new to organising online events, start out by participating in a few yourself to better understand the participant perspective and how to engage and retain your target audience's interest. In particular, try participating in events in other sectors than your own to allow you to focus on the organisational and technical aspects of the event.

As an increasingly important medium, expertise in organising high-quality online events will become more important – and a great opportunity for different sectors to learn from each other. "See" you online soon! 



At this very moment Markus Hengstschläger is giving a lecture on human DNA in Vienna. Change the DNA of your meetings now!

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Prof. Markus Hengstschläger, Director of the Institute of Medical Genetics, Medical University of Vienna © Andreas Hofer

THE ONLINE AND HYBRID MEETING LANDSCAPE

When it comes to technology, a few years is an eternity. Not long ago, online and hybrid meetings were considered as bleeding-edge services - high-risk and unreliable. Those who ventured into these online offerings were often considered black sheep in the conference planning flock. Now, however, offering online services in tandem to traditional in-person events is becoming much more prevalent. The below offers a snapshot of the online and hybrid meeting landscape.

WHAT ENCOMPASSES ONLINE AND HYBRID MEETINGS?

What is it that online offerings can provide that a traditional conference cannot? Access - for all. The Internet represents the democracy of access to knowledge and sharing. Geographic and cost barriers that limits in-person meetings are shattered by offering online methods of connecting.

For the sake of a common definition, let us consider a hybrid meeting a 'live' in-person event coupled with a 'virtual' online component. This could include elements such as utilising e-posters, smartphone apps, webinars, live streaming and the use of an electronic/virtual library to host captured content.

While hybrid conferences offer both an in-person and virtual/online component, purely online offerings are also possible, in the form of an online conference, webinars, virtual libraries or online education materials that are available only online. In fact, there are currently several international conferences which now exist solely online. They provide a series of live and/or pre-recorded webinars to attendees who can track their ongoing process, engage with speakers and colleagues and download accredited certificates upon completion.

The virtual conference format is appropriate for professionals who have limited time and/or budgets, and who want to remain close to their workplace and clients. Online conferences are affordable and accessible to everyone with access to a computer.



Due to the ease of use, wide variety of topics, low cost, and no need to travel, we expect to see the adoption of online learning as a standard.

THE VIRTUAL OPPORTUNITY

Rather than considering online and hybrid solutions as frivolous or risky, suppliers and associations are now viewing them as an integral part of their events. In particular, associations are watching as Millennials push into the workforce and demand more time-responsive, interactive, and task-based forms of learning. In response, traditional in-person conferences are having to pivot in order to capture the interest of the next generation, and online and hybrid events have been a key means for them to do so.

Furthermore, factors such as increasingly tight budgets, more reliable and customisable technology, as well as audiences' higher comfort level with different modes of learning and networking, means

that it is becoming much more commonplace for meeting planners to include virtual offerings to clients.

Here, a few compelling reasons to begin working with online and hybrid events:

1. Digital natives expect value, interaction and convenience as never before;
2. Risk barriers to entry for associations are low;
3. Onsite presentation recordings can be quickly repackaged for an online audience.

Traditional meetings can be enhanced using virtual service elements via:

- Advance promotion (pre-conference webinars and speakers' interviews)
- Accessibility to previously untapped demographics (offering language translations)
- Interaction (building an online community with moderated forums)



- Novel revenue streams (sponsorship opportunities, additional registrations post-meeting)
- Extended content lifespan (access to a virtual library to watch concurrent sessions missed).

In parallel to conferences, virtual services can expand into exclusively online learning offerings. The benefits of online learning include:

- Accommodation of individualised learning
 - Increased access to educational material
 - Increased information dissemination amongst colleagues
 - Reduced costs for both the host and attendees.
- Further, it allows planners to provide quality education at a scale beyond a traditional ballroom, and adds a variety of material aimed at specific audiences all while considering their individual skill levels and career needs. For example, a typical career cycle might include these four stages:
- Student
 - Exam Prep
 - Certification
 - Recertification Cycle

Individuals can be engaged at any stage of this process and then be encouraged towards loyalty to the brand moving forward.

CHALLENGES OF THE ONLINE WORLD

Clearly, there are tantalising benefits of incorporating virtual offerings. All that was outlined above might seem rather straight-forward with regard to implementing an online programme. However, with regard to e-learning, it is not as simple as posting recordings and handouts on the internet. Recordings might need to be repackaged and/or updated to

Rather than considering online and hybrid solutions as frivolous or risky, suppliers and associations are now viewing them as an integral part of their events

remain current, and post-learning questionnaires and follow-up surveys are required to satisfy certain accreditation requirements. Another challenge is ensuring the integrity of online education. Speakers need training and their content needs to be vetted closely for its relevance and quality.

For hybrid meetings there might be these challenges:

- Meeting planners might not have the technical capacity to attempt these new services - so either they will need to be trained, or outside help may need to be sought.
- There is a large amount of co-ordination required with audio visual personnel and venue staff who might be unaccustomed to your goals and requests.
- Speakers will need coaching - they need to consider the impact of their talk on an online audience - and how their talk can both include them and remain relevant days and months following their presentation.
- Delegates will have high expectations for both the speed and ease of use of your new offerings. Subsequently, they require a high level of attention as they become accustomed to these new services.
- While Internet access is almost global, the quality of its access differs widely amongst users. At the same time, those users will all expect the same high quality of access.

NEXT STEPS TO CONSIDER FOR ADDING VIRTUAL COMPONENTS TO YOUR OFFERING

Communicating the value of online and hybrid events to stakeholders typically falls into three groups - clients, supporters (such as sponsors) and delegates. With your clients you might find yourself arguing for the ongoing revenue opportunities these initiatives provide. With sponsors, they will be eager to hear about the detailed statistics you will be able to provide as delegates engage with your digital systems. Finally delegates, either behind a computer or in person, will continue to expect more value for their registration. In an attempt to grow an association audience, we must focus on providing content that is informative, convenient and affordable to them. Online and hybrid events currently offer the best means to accomplish those three promises while providing an individually tailored experience to your attendees. 

CASE STUDY THE GOLD ONLINE LACTATION CONFERENCE

The GOLD Online Lactation Conference is entering its 11th Annual Conference and for all of its existence has been an online Conference. Since its inception, it has grown to become the largest Breastfeeding Conference in the world, reaching 2,800 delegates representing 65+ countries. In recent years, GOLD has replicated this successful online conference model by creating two more completely virtual conferences: Midwifery and Perinatal.

Success factors of the GOLD Online Conference Model includes its integration of technologies in the back end, which make it seamless and easy for its online delegates. Throughout the years, it has leveraged social media as a means of further connecting its online audience. Many delegates are repeat attendees and, much of the time, word of the conference spreads by mouth - perhaps ironic given its online context, but definitely an indicator that the online is increasingly as real and valued as an in-person conference. GOLD has also expanded its offerings into an online library, which is a collection of its past conferences and other webinars.

More information: www.goldlearning.com.



This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author Andrew Dergousoff, Director of Online Solutions, International Conference Services Ltd., Vancouver. IAPCO represents today 117 professional organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries. info@iapco.org / www.iapco.org

UIA'S MEETINGS STATISTICS FOR 2015

For the past six decades, the Union of International Associations (UIA) has undertaken statistical studies on the preceding year's international meetings. The statistics are based on information systematically collected by the UIA Congress Department and selected according to strict criteria maintained over the years. At the time of producing these stats (May 2016) there were 458,453 meetings in the UIA meetings database of which 412,403 (90%) meet the criteria for inclusion. Text Rémi Dévé

Meetings taken into consideration include those organised and/or sponsored by the international organisations which appear in the Yearbook of International Organisations and in the International Congress Calendar. For the UIA, meetings are divided into 3 categories: meetings of international organisations, 3-day other international meetings and 2-day other international meetings.

Just like last year, what the UIA statistics reveal is the strength of secondary cities

WHAT COUNTS

Meetings of international organisations are organised or sponsored by 'international organisations', i.e. international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) that are included in the UIA's Yearbook of International Organisations, with at least 50 participants.

Three-day other international meetings are not organised or sponsored by 'international organisations' but nonetheless of significant international character, with at least 40% of participants who are from countries other than the host country, with at least 5 different nationalities, lasting at least 3 days, with either a concurrent exhibition or at least 300 participants. Two-day other international meetings have to be attended by at least 40% of participants who are from countries other than the host country, with at least 5 different nationalities, lasting at least 2 days, with either a concurrent exhibition or at least 250 participants.

CHANGES & CO

If no major changes seem to have taken place in 2015, there seems to be something happening in Korea Republic, with a steady growth of meetings both in the country in general and in Seoul in particular. Singapore, with almost 120 fewer meetings than last year, has now dropped from the Top 3, leaving USA, Korea (for the first time second!) and Belgium in it. Austria either doesn't fare as well as last year and is now tenth. As to France, it is retaining its ranking as 6th. A noticeable climber is Italy, making the Top 10 for the first time.

As for cities, Brussels is still strongly standing on the 2nd position (and first in Europe!) but with about 120 fewer meetings than last year. Paris has retained its fourth place, while Seoul climbed up two places compared to 2015. Tokyo stands firmly on its grounds, at the 6th position, while Vienna has dropped two places, even though still in the Top 5. Berlin is now in the Top 10, with a strong 8th position, three places better than last year.

TOP INTERNATIONAL MEETING COUNTRIES IN 2015

Rank	City	# Meetings
1	USA	930
2	Korea Rep	891
3	Belgium	737
4	Singapore	736
5	Japan	634
6	France	590
7	Spain	480
8	Germany	472
9	Italy	385
10	Austria	383

But, just like last year, what the UIA statistics reveal is the strength of secondary cities. Take Japan for instance: 634 meetings were held in the country in 2015, but only 249 in the capital city Tokyo. That means an outstanding 385 events took place in other Japanese destinations. The same goes for France and Paris, Germany and Berlin: it's not only the capital cities that helped secure a great number of events and a good position in the rankings...

Last but not least is one striking highlight: the fact that, in a lot of cases, fewer meetings altogether seem to have taken place in 2015. If you look at the USA, Singapore or Belgium, this is intriguing actually. USA welcomed almost 100 fewer meetings than last year, the same for Singapore and a bit more for Belgium. It might be a good time for politicians and suppliers to appreciate the kind of legacy business events leave in a given destination. More on this very soon in Headquarters only!

WWW.UIA.ORG

TOP INTERNATIONAL MEETING CITIES IN 2015

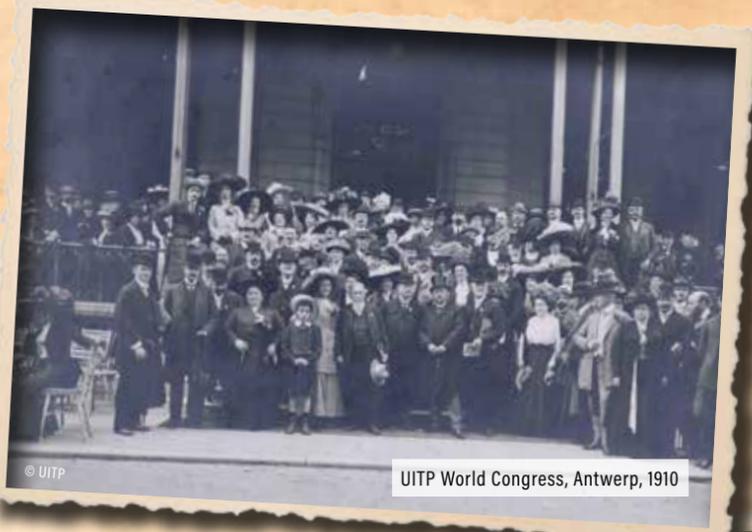
Rank	City	# Meetings
1	Singapore	736
2	Brussels	665
3	Seoul	494
4	Paris	362
5	Vienna	308
6	Tokyo	249
7	Bangkok	242
8	Berlin	215
9	Barcelona	187
10	Geneva	172



UITP IN THE MIRROR

On 17 August 1885, Europe's 50 main tramway operators came together in Brussels to create the "Union Internationale de Tramways/ Internationaler Permanenter Strassenbahn-Verein". The association some know now as UITP (International Association of Public Transport) was thus born with 63 member companies from nine countries.

Over the years UITP has adapted its structure and broadened its focus to become more inclusive of the entire public transport sector. Deepening the dialogue between industry, transport companies and authorities, UITP allows the entire sustainable mobility sector to work together in a spirit of partnership within the association.



© UITP
UITP World Congress, Antwerp, 1910



© UITP
UITP World Congress, Brussels, 1922



© UITP
UITP World Congress, Rome, 1928



© UITP
UITP World Congress, Vienna, 1963

UITP has always been a knowledge hub, a place to collect and exchange best practices and benchmarks and now it is pooling its members' collective strength and concentrating its energy on shaping the future and the exciting urban mobility challenges that lie ahead.

Hence its World Congresses, whose first edition took place Berlin with 110 participants from 6 countries. UITP has come a long way ever since!

Today UITP represents 1,400 member companies giving access to over 16,000 contacts from the fields of urban, local, regional and national mobility from more than 96 countries on all continents. 

More info on UITP www.uitp.org

TECHNOLOGY IS DRIVING DUBAI'S DEVELOPMENT AS A KNOWLEDGE HUB

In November last year, the United Arab Emirates announced the adoption of the UAE Science, Technology and Innovation Higher Policy, which includes 100 national initiatives in the education, health, energy, transportation, space, technology and water sectors. Rémi Dévé reports

The plan is a strategic decision that aims to change the national economy equation to drive it away from depending on limited oil resources. Its goal is to build a vibrant knowledge based economy in the UAE in general and in Dubai in particular, to establish it as a Smart City, with technology at the forefront.

SUSTAINABLE WEALTH

His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan put it like this: "Creating sustainable wealth for the coming generation will depend on science, knowledge, technology and innovation. The Science, Technology and Innovation Higher Policy is a turning point in our journey to develop the UAE economically and socially."

And Dubai wasted no time to make progress in the technology sector. Recent investments include:

- **3D printing technology:** Dubai wants to lead the world in 3D printing. With a strong focus on construction, medical and consumer products,

By 2030, 25 per cent of all transportation trips in Dubai will be smart and driverless

the UAE foresees that 25 percent of their buildings will be based on 3D printing technology by 2030, along with a substantial rise in the 3D printing of household goods, jewelry—and even fast food. Dubai will also set up a new 3D printed lab space to be added to a huge solar park, and inaugurated the first 3D printed office building in May.

- **Driverless transportation:** by 2030, 25 per cent of all transportation trips in Dubai will be smart and driverless, which comes as part of Dubai's strategy to become the smartest city in the world and achieve a sustainable economy in the UAE. The Dubai Autonomous Transportation Strategy is expected to generate economic revenues and savings of up to Dh22bn.

GITEX IN DUBAI

Of course, events play a very specific role showcasing these advancements and the emirate's vision. Later this year, Dubai will host, at Dubai World Trade Centre, the GITEX Technology Week, the widely recognised and annually anticipated ICT trade event across the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. GITEX identifies the hottest global trends in the tech industry and integrates them into new event sectors or conference programmes, with top international brands and local tech leaders launching cutting-edge products, gadgets, and services— all of which are areas Dubai is heavily interested in making progress. 

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO ACCESS SERVICES RELATED TO BUSINESS EVENT DEVELOPMENT, DESTINATION EXPERTISE, CONVENTION PLANNING, ATTENDANCE BUILDING AND ONSITE EVENT SERVICING, VISIT WWW.DUBAIBUSINESSEVENTS.COM CALL +971 600 55 5559 OR EMAIL ASKDBE@DUBAITOURISM.AE



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INTRODUCING JEJU A MEETING ISLAND GEM

As the largest island off the coast of South Korea, Jeju, a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site, offers optimal meeting venues as would be expected in such an international tourist destination.

In Jeju, hotels and conference centres to suit a variety of budgets and requirements can be found all across the island, offering services to suit both large and small events. State-of-the-art facilities amid unbeatable natural surroundings are also on offer. Altogether, events in Jeju can be of any size, from small, one-day conferences for local businesses, to week-long international conventions that attract world-renowned academics and professionals.

KEY ATTRactions

Whatever the occasion, events are sure to incorporate Jeju's greatest attractions, from its rich history to its cultural assets. As the island's hotels often come well-equipped with conference facilities, you don't have to leave the hotel grounds to get all you need from your business trip. But when you do decide to leave, guided tours are of course available!

The island boasts a selection of key attractions that make it a truly unique MICE destination in the Korean peninsula. The recent opening of several new hotels has contributed enormously to customer satisfaction: last year, Jeju Booyoung Hotel and Resort was inaugurated, offering 449 rooms, its own 1,000-seat conference hall and several breakout rooms just metres away from International Convention Centre Jeju (ICC). The Ramada hotel brand has also opened several new facilities on the island.

Jeju Convention & Visitors Bureau (Jeju CVB) provides unique services that cater to business travelers, including MICE event booths, where guests



ICC JEJU & Booyoung Hotel

can receive general information about Jeju and its tourist attractions, and more hands-on experiences, such as trying traditional Jeju cuisine and costume. In addition, the Jeju MICE card was launched last year: this card is for MICE visitors staying on the island, allowing them to use public transport at a discounted price whenever they visit associated stores, restaurants or tourism sites.

INCENTIVES & JEJU MICE EXPO

Incentive tours in Jeju are quite popular: a must-do is clearly the 'A Day Away Awesome Jeju' tour along the Olle walking trail. This trail - with 'olle' meaning 'narrow path from home broadening into a road' in the Jeju language - goes around the entire island, allowing travelers to experience hidden locations

and share regional dishes with locals and trail experts. In the future though, the Jeju CVB is also expecting to see growth in the conventions industry as more national and international conferences will be organised on the island.

As one of Asia's most exceptional MICE locations, the island was able to launch Jeju MICE Expo last year, the first MICE expo in Korea to be organised and implemented by a local bureau. The event was tremendously successful, with local MICE companies and Jeju CVB partners enjoying face-to-face meetings and networking with national and international buyers. This year, Jeju MICE Expo is expected to take place at ICC Jeju in November.



CONTACT

JEJU CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
JULIE PARK, ASSISTANT MANAGER OF
MARKETING DEPT.
T. +82-64-739-2209
JULIE@JEJUMICE.ORG
WWW.JEJUMICE.ORG

KOREA

A SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

There are a multitude of sound business reasons for meeting in Korea, which is proving its ability to host large, and sustainable conventions. Beyond Meetings, as the strapline suggests, Korea is also a perfect destination for pre- and post-conference tours.

Korea also takes a lead in sustainable, green meetings. In Korea, green is in vogue. There are government policies to clean up waterways, construct urban green belts, and reduce electricity usage and food waste.

For the nation's meetings sector, going green not only makes good business sense, it also drives forward sustainable practices that are shaping the way business events are run.

Located in Incheon's low-carbon award winning sustainable city & International Business District, Songdo¹, the equally lauded Songdo ConvensiA² makes a point of recycling waste materials generated from exhibition construction.

COEX in Seoul and BEXCO in Busan collect rainwater for their grey-water facilities, such as restrooms. Newer venues such as BEXCO and EXCO, in Daegu, capitalize on solar and geothermal energy. While COEX updates to stay green to stay green by installing LED lighting, upgrading HVAC³ and flooring, with green parking for hybrid cars and cycles, amongst its initiatives.

Korea's top business hotels are also following suit. Lotte Hotel, Busan has a unique water purification system, Jeju Haevichi Resort & Hotel's garden acts as a natural air purification system. Jeju Island, itself, is set to go carbon free by 2030 currently the world's largest Smart Grid community (for low carbon, green growth strategy).

Korea is also a regular host of international green meetings through a rising global awareness of the country's environmental initiatives. In 2008, Changwon's CECO convention centre hosted Ramsar COP10 meeting; and COP12 at Alpensia in Pyeongchang 2010, soon to host the 2018 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.



'upcycled' 2018 PyeongChang House

WHY HOLD MEETINGS IN KOREA?

- 1/3 of the world's population lives within a three hour flight
- 186 cities have direct flights from 90+ airlines
- World leader in R&D (OECD Feb 2016)
- A technologically advanced nation
- World leading brands such as Samsung, LG, Hyundai et al
- Lead in medical advance
- Lead in alternative energy
- A proven meetings destination, 2nd in the world behind USA⁴

EXCO and HICO, in Gyeongju, jointly hosted the 7th World Water Forum in 2015, and KINTEX is home to Renewable Energy World Asia 2016, part of Asia Power Week September 2016. Korea also hosts annual events on green sustainability, such as Green Growth Korea, KINTEX, and Eco Expo Korea at COEX, the latter running October 2016. 

To learn more about Korea and the Bureau's support for business events contact Korea MICE, Anne Ridyard, Appointed MICE representative, Korea MICE, T. +44 1628 5261, KoreaMice@moulden-marketing.co.uk, www.koreaconvention.org

¹ Sustainable Cities Award (Urban Land Institute, Financial Times 2008), People's Choice Award for Urban Design (HKIA 2007)

² U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) awarded it the first LEED-certified convention facility in Asia

³ Heating, ventilation, air-conditioning

⁴ UIA statistics 2016



Songdo IBD, City of the future

All images courtesy of Korea Tourism Organisation

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SWITZERLAND CONVENTION & INCENTIVE BUREAU PRESENTS

CONGRESS CENTER BASEL

A STRONG INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS DESTINATION

The Congress Center Basel is Switzerland's largest conference centre, located directly alongside Messe Basel. The venue belongs to the MCH Group, which operates three exhibition centres in Basel, Zurich and Lausanne. The Congress Center Basel has a direct footbridge link to the exhibition complex by Herzog & de Meuron and can accommodate congresses with more than 5,000 delegates.

Basel is Switzerland's prime location for exhibitions and conferences. Its internationally famous events include BASELWORLD, the world's most important show for the watch and jewellery industry and Art Basel, acknowledged as the world's premier international art show for modern and contemporary works. The city of Basel is a major player in the life sciences, being home to numerous biotech companies, and the pharmaceutical companies based around Basel are continually expanding.

RECORD RESULTS

Thanks to state-of-the-art infrastructure designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron, the Congress Center Basel is asserting itself in the international setting with record results. After the best-ever autumn of 2015, with more than 25,000 congress participants in three months, Jonas Scharf, Managing Director of the Congress Center Basel, was delighted to welcome new international congresses in the first half of 2016 too.

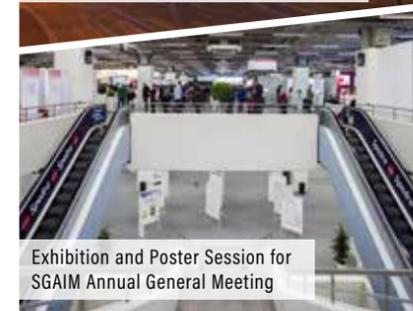
The ESC congress of the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health and the ECFS congress of the European Cystic Fibrosis Society both brought more than 2,000 participants to Basel. At the end of June, Biotech Outsourcing Strategies cmc was held in Basel for the first time and wishes to become established on an annual basis. Other highlights in the Basel congress diary were the 2016 International Symposium on Dental Hygiene in mid-June, plus several national Swiss Congresses, including the Annual General Meeting of SGAIM, now Switzerland's largest specialised medical society.



The cone of light during BASELWORLD



Building designed by Herzog & de Meuron



Exhibition and Poster Session for SGAIM Annual General Meeting

MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGNED BY HERZOG & DE MEURON

The Congress Center Basel – with its 25 modern rooms – is located in the heart of the city, alongside Messe Basel and close to numerous hotels. The exhibition complex designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron opened in 2013 and combines functionality and aesthetics in the perfect manner. This state-of-the-art building with its multifunctional Event Hall on the ground floor has a footbridge linking it to the Congress Center Basel.

A further 11 modular rooms considerably expand the Congress Center Basel's facilities. These can be used individually, or combined, to accommodate breakout sessions for 10 to 1,000 people. The modular rooms are located on the ground floor, directly accessible from the main entrance of the Congress Center. A plenary event with over 5,000 participants and sufficient space for concurrent breakout sessions in the immediate vicinity is thus no problem at the Congress Center Basel. 

CONTACT

CONGRESS CENTER BASEL

T. +41 58 206 28 28 // SALES@CONGRESS.CH
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SWITZERLAND CONVENTION & INCENTIVE BUREAU

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© MCH Messe Basel

AUSTRALIA BIG LANDSCAPES INSPIRE BIG THINKING

It seems like the stuff of science fiction: paralysed people learning to walk again, with the power of the mind moving prosthetics limbs or an exoskeleton. Yet this revolutionary invention is real – a brain-machine interface the size of a small paperclip that will be implanted in the first patient at the Royal Melbourne Hospital in 2017. A product of Australia's soaring expertise in the medical technology sector.



TOM OXLEY

Few years ago, Australian neurology resident Thomas Oxley set out to design a device that uses brain waves to power prosthetic limbs. Today, Oxley's revolutionary invention is about to enter human trials, giving hope that millions of people paralysed by injury or stroke will soon be able to walk again.

Oxley's futuristic device – a tiny stent-electrode or 'stentrode' – also promises to predict and halt epileptic seizures and assist people with a range of conditions, from motor neurone and Parkinson's diseases to compulsive disorders and depression.

In a nutshell, the matchstick-sized gadget will be inserted, without invasive surgery, into a blood

vessel next to the brain's motor cortex. From there it will detect and translate neural activity, such as the intention to walk, and send commands wirelessly to exoskeleton legs.

Detect, translate, transmit and walk. That's what scientists call brain-machine interface, and it begins with straightforward day surgery to thread the stent up the groin to the brain. Trials with sheep, published in February 2016 in Nature Biotechnology, revealed that the animals were fine. They were walking and eating within an hour, and had no side effects.

If all goes according to plan following human trials in 2017, Oxley predicts the stentrode could be on the market by the early 2020s. "We've been able to create the world's first minimally invasive brain recording device that is implanted without high-risk open brain surgery," says Oxley.

THE ROAD TO COMMERCIALISATION

Oxley is in New York to do a two-year fellowship in cerebral angiography at Mount Sinai Hospital, a specialty which employs non-invasive procedures to visualise blood vessels in the brain. It's a skill directly related to his work in vascular bionics,

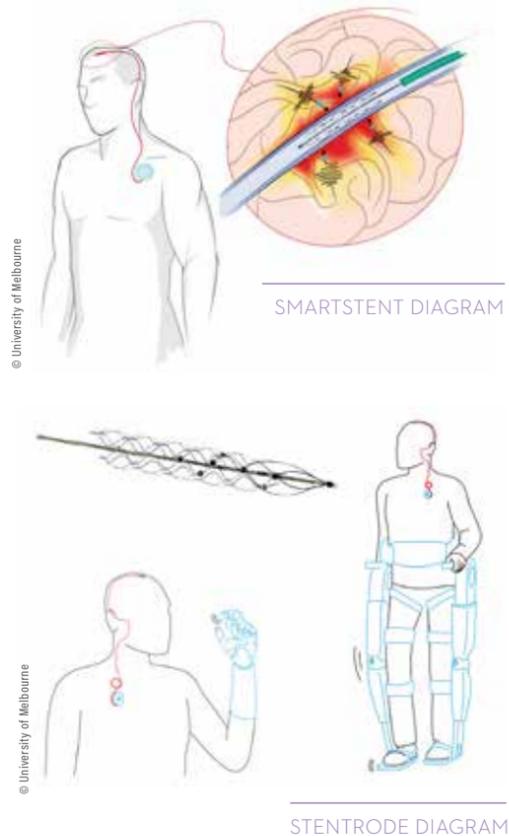
exploiting the body's blood vessels and veins for technologically enhanced therapeutic ends.

Remarkably, Oxley co-invented the stentrode while he was a Melbourne University (MU) doctoral student, along with MU collaborator Dr Nicholas Opie, a biomechanical engineer.

In 2012 the pair co-founded a startup company called SmartStent Pty Ltd to refine and prepare the stentrode for market. Their goal: commercialise what promises to be one of the world's most important medical inventions.

After building hundreds of stentrode prototypes, the next step is testing the technology with people. "We're trying to raise A\$4 million for the first human trials at Royal Melbourne Hospital," Oxley notes. "We're hoping to begin in late 2017."

Given the life-changing and commercial potential of the stentrode, it's little wonder that SmartStent moved to Silicon Valley in April 2016. There, Oxley, Opie and cardiologist Rahul Sharma, with Cedars-Sinai Health System in Los Angeles, established Synchron Inc. as their new corporate headquarters. SmartStent remains the Australian subsidiary.



Tom Oxley in surgery

© Mount Sinai Health System

SOLVING THE MYSTERIES OF THE BRAIN

Medicine seemed a good choice for a kid keen to reverse engineer the brain to solve the mysteries of human consciousness. So Oxley went off to Monash Medical School in Melbourne, finishing in 2006. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Melbourne's The Alfred Hospital in 2009.

"Then I took a year off to go travelling," recalls Oxley, who didn't begin his neurology residency until 2011. "I was travelling and intellectually exploring."

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) was on his 'to visit' list. DARPA is an arm of the US Department of Defense. Located in Arlington, Virginia, the agency is responsible for developing emerging military technologies, including biotechnology.

"I'd been reading about their prosthetic limb work for a couple of years," says Oxley, who got in touch with neurologist Colonel Geoffrey Ling, director of DARPA's Biotechnologies Office. After an initial chat, Ling was sufficiently impressed to invite his visitor to develop what Oxley claims became a "pretty blue sky, out there" proposal.

The result? Oxley left Virginia with a promise of US\$1.3 million and instructions to put a team together to create and test his device. "After all that excitement, I came home and had to start my neurology residency. It was a steep learning curve," says Oxley, who had to tread carefully as a junior resident with potentially large research funding coming in.

Fortunately, Oxley's PhD supervisor and mentor, Professor Terry O'Brien, was Oxley's academic champion. He helped negotiate the occasionally challenging politics and opened doors to the range of experts Oxley needed to set up the DARPA-inspired Vascular Bionics Laboratory at Melbourne University. The two men even leveraged DARPA's investment into over A\$4 million, with grants from Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council and other Australian bodies.

Oxley completed his residency in 2013, and submitted his doctorate in February 2016. But the rest isn't history. There's a stentrode to trial and commercialise. An invention which O'Brien calls the 'Holy Grail' of bionics. **RD**

First published on www.australiaunlimited.com
Author: Leigh Dayton

With Australia's proven track record of successfully delivering events, and reputation as a place offering innovative people, award winning convention and exhibition centres, unique wildlife, beautiful landscapes, and excellent cuisine and wine, it's no wonder that the appetite for Australia as a leading business events destination continues to grow.

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THE ISLAND OF IRELAND WHERE HARD-WORKING MEETS EASY-GOING

If you're looking for the ideal destination for your next conference or event, you need look no further than the Island of Ireland. More and more international organisations and associations are choosing Ireland - where hard-working meets easy-going. Ireland has so much to offer and the Meet in Ireland team is happy to help you, every step of the way.

Ireland has a unique combination of *people, place and proximity*, which makes it the perfect choice for your next conference destination.

PROXIMITY

Getting to Ireland couldn't be easier- there are over 206 routes to Ireland with 78 airlines. Ireland is ideally located on the western tip of Europe, one hour from London and a mere six hours from New York. There are 5 international airports, with many regional airports well serviced also.

Once in Ireland, a comfortable place to stay awaits you! There are over 900 hotels, with 60,000 bedrooms, waiting to welcome you. These range from international brands to quaint boutique hotels, with every price range catered to, from campuses to castles!

PLACE

When it comes to preferred conference destination, Ireland offers a variety of unique and original venues. From dedicated convention centres for up to 8,000 delegates to medieval castles, each venue is inspiring and state-of-the-art.

One of the best known is probably the Convention Centre Dublin, "a greenhouse for ideas that is engineered for imaginations", where innovation meets hospitality. The CCD has hosted over 750 events with over 700,000 delegate days, and has won 24 industry awards. The CCD remains committed to investing in the newest technologies and latest innovations, ensuring that your conference there enjoys every success.

Another success story on the island of Ireland is the Belfast Waterfront. Situated in one of Ireland's most exciting cities; the Belfast Waterfront has undergone a makeover of late, with £30 million investment to renew and expand. The Waterfront now offers over 7000m² of flexible space, catering for conferences of different sizes.

When it comes to incentive trips, where better to reconnect and relax than Ireland? Explore the modern, cosmopolitan cities or lose yourself in the vast, savage countryside!

PEOPLE

Ireland is known worldwide for the welcoming nature of its people. In Ireland, making friends is an everyday business, and there is no such thing as strangers, just friends yet to meet. The Meet in Ireland team is always committed to ensuring your event enjoys every success. When you meet in Ireland, you meet with excellence and professionalism.

What's more, if you are thinking of bringing an international conference to Ireland, you may apply for financial support to assist you with your bid and maximise delegate attendance. Meet in Ireland takes pride in its dedicated teams in Brussels and Ireland who will help you source a venue, secure financial support, showcasing sample programs or putting you in contact with professionals in Ireland who are ready to cater to your specific needs. 

CONTACT
DANIELLE NEYTS
DNEYTS@TOURISMIRELAND.COM
T. +32 (0)2 643 2121
MEETINIRELAND.COM



RECEIVING LOVE FROM TAIWAN HIGH FIVE EVENT ATTRACTED HIGH PARTICIPANT RATE AT IMEX 2016

AT IMEX 2016, Taiwan designed the most inviting campaign attracting many visitors to high five the Taiwan palm and receive love responses at the TAIWAN booth.

The High Five campaign, based on the well-known and fun way of greeting, was set off by MEET TAIWAN, Taiwan's MICE Promotion Program led by Ministry of Economic Affairs. The aim? To connect with interested buyers and show the world the warm Taiwanese hospitality. What surprised the buyers most was the CSR program embedded in the campaign, with which MEET TAIWAN plans to order an equivalent amount of exclusive Taiwan-designed souvenirs from World Vision, and raffle out the souvenirs at the next IT&CM Asia and CIBTM China exhibitions this September. The pass-on of the souvenirs symbolises MEET TAIWAN's ever-lasting devotion to the world and the MICE industry.

TEMPERATURE RISING

At IMEX 2016, the welcoming palm of Taiwan generated 373% more traffic at the booth than last year, which was the best performance ever. The High Five campaign made its debut at IT&CM China 2016 and guaranteed the visitor to find extraordinary MICE activity suggestions with a warmth detector that transmits the high-five records to Facebook. Apart from the ever-highest quantitative performance, MEET TAIWAN received positive feedbacks from foreign buyers. One international MICE professional who had come to Taiwan for a corporate meeting before was impressed that the heat detector responded 'Huashan Creative Park', which was exactly the venue where she organised the party at that time. The elegance and historical building which boasts close relationship with the city's development caught her eye and she couldn't wait to visit Taiwan again.

The joint effort made by MEET TAIWAN and other central and local government administrations also demonstrated the solid power and competitiveness



373%

THE INCREASED TRAFFIC AT
THE MEET TAIWAN BOOTH
AT IMEX 2016 THANKS
TO THE WELCOMING PALM

of Taiwan. The Taiwanese MICE representative group including hotels, PCOs, aircrafts and venues also showed Taiwan's professional resources in servicing international meetings and incentive tours. Eyeing on the fruitful business opportunities, each presented special performances and themes in order to attract a higher number of international events to Taiwan.

ART, DIY & POLAROID

In addition to the High Five Campaign initiated by MEET TAIWAN, there were a cutting silhouette performance to show the beauty of traditional arts, DIY of Taiwan's famous Pearl Bubble Tea and tasting of traditional snacks of Taipei which many foreigners fall for, and the exclusive Taiwan Polaroid

which left ever-lasting memory in the visitors' hearts. With themes like "Taipei Makes Perfection" and "Meetings' Port, Meeting Support", Taiwan pavilion successfully stood out from other exhibitors and many companies were encouraged to sign up for meetings in Taiwan.

The High Five Campaign not only reached 170K+ Facebook users on MEET TAIWAN's Facebook Page during the two exhibitions, but also sparked at the IMEX booth with the creative and interactive warmth detector. The lantern-themed decorations and activities at the booth all represented the traditional culture and the beauty of Taiwanese folk life, inviting more visitors to experience the energetic MICE resources in Taiwan. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE VISIT
WWW.MEETTAIWAN.COM

Taiwan's MICE Promotion Program (MEET TAIWAN)
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HANGZHOU BECOMING AN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS CITY

The ICCA rankings don't lie. In 2014, Hangzhou was the third convention city for the fourth consecutive year among all mainland cities in China, just behind Beijing and Shanghai. In 2015, Hangzhou climbed up three places, a testament to the city's positioning as an international meeting city. Rémi Dévé reports

CATCHING UP

Hangzhou, the capital and largest city of eastern China's Zhejiang Province has ambitions to catch up with its more developed counterparts in the meetings industry.

The lovely lakeside city, which boasts a UNESCO World Heritage site in the West Lake, is an ideal location for events—not only because of its natural beauty, which offers delegates an alternative meeting landscape, but also because of Hangzhou's easy accessibility—it's only two hours by train from central Shanghai, or a 90-minute flight from Hong Kong.

With the hosting of G20 as well as the 2022 Asian Games, Hangzhou is set to become an international player on the business events map. The capital of the Zhejiang Province has all the necessary infrastructure to accommodate international associations: more than 250 star hotels, including 23 five-star properties, and the soon-to-be-open Hangzhou International Expo Center in the Binjiang District, which will be the largest MICE venue with 61 conference rooms and the city's largest conference hall – just to name a few!



61

 THE NUMBER OF CONFERENCE ROOMS AT THE SOON-TO-BE-OPEN HANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL EXPO CENTER

BETTER NEWS

The G20 summit is just one of the big events Hangzhou has secured so far. Among others, let's name the 9th International Youth Nuclear Congress which was held in July, the 8th World Congress of Herpetology in August and the 1st Internet Public Charity Convention in October with high-profile speakers such as Ban Ki-moon, Bill Gates and Bill Clinton. There is also the 50th AIPPI World Intellectual Property Congress in 2020 with an estimated attendance of 3,000 participants.

And there is even better news for association planners. 2016 is the third year now that a "MICE Hangzhou Conference & Meeting Special Offer" program is launched. Initiated by Hangzhou local government, hundreds of hotels, travel agencies and

conference companies have indeed come together to promote conferences and meetings in Hangzhou. And now a discount of maximum 27,000€ on meeting rates is possible: the idea is to attract organisations outside of Hangzhou and even worldwide to hold conferences and meetings in the city. This win-win endeavor, the first of its kind, can benefit associations that are not based in Hangzhou and greatly stimulate the city's business tourism economy.

CONTACT

ROGER SHU
T. +86-571-87204909
ROGER@HZ.CN
WWW.MICEHANGZHOU.COM/EN
WWW.EN.GOTOHZ.COM

AIPC IN NANTES

DIVERSIFY AND ADAPT YOURSELF

From 3 to 6 July, la Cité Nantes Events Center welcomed its peers as it hosted the AIPC Annual Conference (International Association of Convention Centres). It was the second time in AIPC's history that France was chosen as the conference destination and the occasion for Nantes to showcase what they can offer to meeting planners. Rémi Dévé reports

The AIPC Conference is aimed at meetings industry stakeholders and provides the opportunity to discuss MICE related matters and the very diverse challenges convention and exhibition centres can face the world over. As always, the programme combined global commentators and industry expertise to a 360 degree view of the key issues facing centres managers today. AIPC represents over 180 convention centres from over 57 countries.

HEAD-ON

The overall theme of the conference was "Diversification and Adaptation". Competition and adaptation are two of the most important challenges referenced by convention centres today. Flexibility and diversification are amongst the most the most logical and common responses to these challenges – and those used by many other sectors facing similar issues. The Conference theme addressed all of these

126 THE PLACE OF NANTES IN THE 2015 ICCA RANKINGS

areas head-on – and looked at what the implications are for not only managers but also centre suppliers, owners and partners, both current and potential.

Of course, at a conference like that, the programme is what creates its added value and what justifies the time out of the office for delegates. If some parts of it were a bit weak to be really honest, there were a few take-outs. Keynote speaker John Thackara explained for instance how other business sectors have faced and coped with disruptive change and what lessons may have been learned that have application to centres. He urged the audience to think about their venue "as a nature reserve reconnecting cities and nature, a lab to reinvent the future and

clients' expectations, a micro-business hub and a cooperation platform."

One area receiving particular attention was that of managing the impacts of terrorist attacks on destination reputation and business prospects – this was addressed by a senior level panel of representatives from Brussels, Paris and Istanbul.

MEMBER SURVEY

The results of the 2016 AIPC Member Survey were also definitely a highlight for me, as the organisation reported an 8% revenue growth worldwide, with Africa the fastest growing region in the world just like last year. If they reported on an increase in national competition, AIPC members also emphasized the fact that the focus was definitely on networking and experiential meetings with creative use of meeting spaces. On another hand, event producers are said to be less willing to commit to long-term booking, while

ways to address competition, such as investment in technology, different marketing approaches, etc. were reviewed.

Last but not least, the Gala Dinner held at the famous Machines de l'Île, announced the much sought-after AIPC Apex Award winner. The Award owes its prominence to the fact that competitors are rated entirely on the basis of client ratings as assessed by the global market research company Ipsos. If Nantes ranked among the 15 finalists of the 2016 Conference, it's the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition that got the Award, which has previously been won by centres in leading global cities such as Valencia and Vancouver. 

MORE INFO ON AIPC
OR THE AIPC SURVEY
WWW.AIPC.ORG

NANTES & LA CITÉ

COUNT ON THEM WHEN MEETING IN FRANCE



If I had already extensively written about Nantes and La Cité Event Center, I had never actually seen it with my own eyes. The AIPC Annual Conference was the opportunity for me to understand that what they say is true: Nantes is indeed a vibrant, culturally booming second-tier city, with a lot of assets when it comes to hosting associations.

The gate to French Brittany, a city both green and blue with hundreds of parks and three rivers, Nantes screams history everywhere your head turns, with the Castle of the Dukes of Brittany or the gothic cathedral for instance. But Nantes might be because it was great at reshaping its industrial landscape through art and culture that it gained international fame. I was there at the opening of the annual summer festival 'Le Voyage à Nantes' and I could finally see the well-known elephant of the Machines de l'Île, and I could definitely touch upon the vibrancy of the destination.

With delegates having to make the most of their stay when out of the office, Nantes may be the place to be. One feature that really stroke me was the fact that everything, I mean literally everything, is at walking distance. If your hotel is in the city centre and your conference at La Cité, the commuting by foot is a mere 15 minutes, and then at night it's easy to find a restaurant or to catch up on an exhibition in one of the city's many museums.

No wonder that, with 20 international conventions held in Nantes in 2015, including 11 at la Cité Nantes Events Centre, the Nantes destination has moved to the 126th position

in the ICCA rankings, compared to 176th in 2014. And with the opening of the Nantes Saint-Nazaire Convention Bureau in 2015, the region is definitely broadening its international outreach, La Cité being instrumental in getting large-scale events to Nantes.

Talking about La Cité, its international character is no secret. Three auditoriums for up to 2,000 people, 30 breaking rooms and 6,000 sqm of exhibition space, eco-responsible services and the AIPC Quality Standard certification make it an easy place to meet in. And with Nantes named the 'European Green Capital 2013', it's no surprise La Cité is highly involved the destination's environmental and climate policies. CSR is at the core of its overall strategy, which includes a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and a boosting of in-house green practices.

Stay tuned for what Nantes can offer association planners in the upcoming editions of Headquarters!

CONTACT

→ **Nantes Saint-Nazaire Convention Bureau**
Lucile Suire
Convention Bureau Manager
l.suire@nantes-saintnazaire.fr
www.nantes-saintnazaire.fr

→ La Cité Events Center

Eric Montant
Head of Sales and Development
T. +33 (0)2 51 88 20 02
eric.montant@lacite-nantes.fr
www.lacite-nantes.com



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ASSOCIATION BUYERS JOIN THE CLUB AT IBTM WORLD 2016

The flagship global industry event has designed a programme specifically for association buyers wanting to make the most of their time in Barcelona from 29 November-1 December this year.

WHAT IS MY ASSOCIATION | MY CLUB?

My Association | My Club is an exclusive programme designed to serve the needs of the association meeting planner. Fully hosted by ibtm world, every association buyer who attends the exhibition in Barcelona will be able to take advantage of the many benefits – and they are all FREE. The show's organisers asked international association buyers what they wanted; and My Association | My Club is the perfect platform to get the most out of ibtm world 2016.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

It's about flexibility, personalisation and meeting the specific needs of those involved across the industry sector. My Association | My Club offers a range of choices and tailored events so that members can maximise their time at ibtm world 2016.

ibtm world 2016 will be offering complimentary travel and accommodation; a flexible schedule of fully or semi-hosted itineraries; as well as welcoming those who simply want to benefit from ibtm world's appointments system and then choose how to spend the rest of their visit.

Also:

- A personalised diary of pre-scheduled appointments with international exhibitors
- Networking events – from breakfasts to cocktails, parties to dinners - it's all up to the buyer to choose how flexible they want to be
- Onsite support and a simple registration process
- An inspirational education programme packed with on trend subjects for a learning experience that is of real benefit to any individual in the sector
- Association hub hotel where association buyers can gain from being with peers and building connections
- A dedicated association area in the Hosted Buyer lounge to connect with colleagues, hold



meetings and relax with complimentary food and refreshments throughout the day

- Daily "huddles" – new this year with interactive campfire sessions to drop by and join in

WHY WILL IT BENEFIT YOUR JOB?

Introduced 2 years ago, My Association | My Club was created because association buyers said the benefits of ibtm world were so great they wanted time to explore, experience and enjoy every aspect of the exhibition. Inspired by that knowledge, an exclusive programme was designed to open up more opportunities for buyers and give them the best of both worlds. By opening the show floor to everyone on the association programme, ibtm world 2016 has put together the right combination of pre-scheduled appointments as required, as well as the time to make connections by dropping by stands and opening up conversations. They've also built on

the need to talk peer to peer and have included that in the many options in the programme this year.

HOW DO YOU JOIN?

Simply apply to be a Hosted Buyer at ibtm world 2016 to have the opportunity of joining My Association | My Club. You will need to qualify via a quick and easy online application form. You'll be asked for your reasons for attending ibtm world 2016, your purchasing authority and the type of business you're looking to place in the future, including budgets. This is so that they can ensure they connect the right buyers to the right suppliers.

WHAT DO YOU DO NEXT?
GO TO
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For enquiries, please contact:

Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau

Europe Representatives

Anette Palm, Director

T: +49 (0) 6307 401103 F: +49 (0) 6307 401104 E: anette@worldwideconventions.com

Head Office

Suite 22.3, Level 22, Menara IMC, No. 8 Jalan Sultan Ismail, 50250 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
T: +603 2034 2090 F: +603 2034 2091 E: sales@myceb.com.my | www.myceb.com.my





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