



October 8, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Once again, I am pleased to announce that we are now accepting entries for the 2010 AIPC Apex Award for the World's Best Congress Centre. As you know, this program is now taking place on alternate years to the AIPC Innovation Award, which adds even more importance to the results.

I want to remind members of the many benefits that participation in this Award program offers, including the recognition that award winners and runners-up achieve amongst both clients and industry colleagues as well as obtaining very useful insights into client perceptions of facility performance and insights into what could use improvement. Both of these are important benefits in today's challenging and highly competitive market.

The award will be made on the basis of an evaluation by a highly qualified academic team, this year again from the [Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management](#) of the University of Brussels, led by Professor Bertrand Mareschal, PhD, Faculty of Science, Politics and Economics. This rigorous, third-hand evaluation process has earned the AIPC Apex Award a great deal of credibility in the industry, which contributes even further to its enviable reputation.

In order to enable the broadest possible member participation, we are maintaining as much flexibility as possible in the types of events which qualify. For this reason, we will continue to accept evaluations for a variety of different event types, although this must include international congress and convention events in order to retain our focus on the global meetings area, which has always been a defining feature of the Award.

Participation is simple:

- You must provide the review team at the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management with a list of your clients from within the period of April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010 to serve as references for survey purposes. These references may include either events already completed or those confirmed to be taking place up until March 31, 2010. This list must be prepared using the AIPC Apex Award 2010 Competition Entry Form.
- The minimum number of event references to be submitted is **25**. These references may be of **any event type but must include at least 10 congresses, conventions or conferences** (with a minimum of 100 participants), **at least five of which must be international** (defined as those which either rotate through or have significant participation from at least two countries).



- You may repeat client references submitted in previous years if you wish. However, you may only submit one client reference per event. The final entry date for the submission of references: November 30, 2009.
- We recommend that you verify your client's email address when listing them as a reference, since they will be disqualified if the address is rendered invalid by delivery failure. The system is set-up to only accept completed questionnaires in .doc format coming from the client email address that is quoted on your original list of references (no pdf files or faxes are acceptable).

The Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management will send the AIPC Apex Award questionnaire to each client in their preferred language (English, French or German) with a request for their response on your behalf. A **minimum of 15 clients** must have completed the questionnaire for you to be eligible for the competition finals, and you will be advised of the number of questionnaires that have been completed in order to allow you to follow up with such clients to encourage them to do so. **The final date for clients to returning the completed questionnaire is April 10, 2010.**

As is our usual practice, the 2010 AIPC Apex Award winner, along with the two runners-up, will be announced during the 2010 AIPC Annual Conference in Liverpool. Finalists will all receive a copy of their respective evaluation report for their own review along with two comparisons: first, a comparison with the scores of the winning centre and second, a comparison with the average of all finalists. These have proven very useful in the past for competitors to identify areas where there is room for improvement in their performance, particularly relative to other centres.

Please note:

- All information submitted by the participating centres as well as client responses will be regarded as confidential, to be used only by the AIPC Apex Award evaluation team at the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management and destroyed at the completion of the competition;
- Each finalist will be assessed a participation fee of € 400 to cover the costs of the assessment process.
- The evaluation process and final results will be audited by two AIPC members appointed as program auditors by the AIPC Executive Board.



To initiate your participation, please complete the 2010 Competition Entry Form and forward it by email to: [chcollet@ulb.ac.be](mailto:chcollet@ulb.ac.be) where it will be assembled with those of other participants for presentation to the team at the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management for analysis.

The very strong reputation that the AIPC Apex Award has enjoyed since its inception is a product of both a rigorous evaluation process and the strong participation by our members. I would therefore encourage you to join in the competition and help us demonstrate the importance we place on encouraging the highest possible standards of professionalism in our industry.

We look forward to your entry!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Hirt'.

Edgar Hirt  
President