



WAS 2017 A GOOD YEAR?

In most performance terms, 2017 was a very good year for the 185 AIPC members as a continuation of a growth pattern since the GFC in 2008 at a rate that has even exceeded growth in global GDP. However, it was also a time of many challenges as members worked hard to address to changing organiser and delegate expectations that demands constant innovation and adaptation.

Levels of flexibility

The need to generate increasing levels of flexibility in all areas – from spaces and technologies to services and event management – will continue to dominate our environment, as will the need to further enhance and diversify revenues to satisfy owner expectations and support needed new investments. We also face new challenges in responding to the increasing importance of digitalization in order to be seen as relevant to marketers and organisers who have many other options to choose from as to how they engage with their members and customers.

Human resources

At the same time, we are also increasingly challenged to compete with other sectors for the human resources we need to deliver service excellence – a challenge that needs to be met with increased training and retention measures as well as an effort to position ours as a desirable career path.

Economic engines

Above all, we need to further drive the proposition that convention centres are broadly impactful economic engines whose real function is to support overall economic and community development agendas in their cities and countries, as it is only with this kind of recognition that we will get the kind of support we need to prevail in an increasingly intense marketplace.

Industry needs

AIPC is constantly researching industry needs and conditions and creating corresponding programming in response, as this is the only way for an organisation to remain relevant in a fast-changing environment. However, our greatest strength – one that has shown its value over our entire history – is the knowledge, insights and experience of our members, so efficient vehicles for facilitating information exchange and collective problem-solving is also a big factor.

We also believe that the industry in the future will require an even greater level of partnership between centres and their clients in order to optimise the delegate experience. This means we need to know in more detail our client's needs and opportunities and have the ability to actively and creatively support them in addressing these. That in turn requires a greater investment in joint activities and programming with the broader meeting community.