

AIPC academy 'over-subscribed'

BELGIUM – The International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC) staged its first Academy session in Brussels, 11-15 February, and it was deemed a "huge success" by secretary general Marianne de Raay.

"In fact, we were oversubscribed this year," she says. "Excellence in facility management is becoming increasingly important as demands and complexities continue to change and grow."

"As a result, we believe the programme will become the industry standard for training in

international convention centre management, and we look forward to it being an integral part of training in our sector for the years ahead."

AIPC president Barbara Maple says the purpose of the Academy is to provide broad, industry-focused training, which will help convention centre staff improve performance in their current positions. Additionally, it will prepare them for more responsibilities within their respective facilities.

"Over the past year, we've worked hard to design a programme that deals

Sanya in the zone

CHINA – Sanya, a resort on the tropical island of Hainan, is aiming to tap the potential of the meetings industry and the city's hotels and resorts have joined with the tourism authority to produce a new brochure. "It is the strategy of resorts in Sanya to assist event planners and companies to ensure their events deliver the objectives."

General manager of the Hilton Sanya Resort and Spa, Dirk de Kuyper, says the venues are committed to providing a full-service event team.

Heinan enjoys Special Economic Zone status and is served by two international airports.

Austrians optimistic

AUSTRIA – Vienna's Austria Centre, the country's biggest venue, is reporting projected revenue growth of 10 per cent during 2007, which it says will be the third consecutive year in which it has operated in profit.

The venue has staged the annual 16,000 delegate European Congress of Radiology for a number of years each March, and has now signed the event for a further 10-year period.

Another regular customer, the European Geosciences Union, with 8,000 delegates, is coming to the ACV for the third year running, and looks set to return in 2008 and 2009.

Queensland centre reorganisation

AUSTRALIA – A number of management changes have been made at Cairns Convention Centre following announcement that director of sales and marketing Rochelle Uechtritz is to step down after eight years in the role.

Uechtritz is to continue working both with the centre and management company Ogden IFC in a project marketing capacity.

Meanwhile, director of operations Ross Steele has been promoted to general manager, and senior business development manager Jenny Graham takes the position of sales director, overseeing a restructured sales and marketing team.

Centre managing director Geoff Donaghy says that during Uechtritz' tenure, CCC has become one of the most widely recognised regional venues in the world and is considered a global benchmark in meetings industry marketing.

"In 2005 Cairns was ranked third only after Sydney and Melbourne in the number of major international conferences attracted to Australia," he says.

"Ross and Jenny are both excellent, highly performing executives who will ensure the standards that gained the Cairns Convention Centre's recognition as the best venue in the world in 2004 will be maintained," he says of Steele's and Graham's promotions.



UK – In an industry first, CMW has launched an online edition, starting with the February issue, which was publicly unveiled at the International Confex exhibition in London. In our picture, circulation manager Jon Muir demonstrates the browsable, electronic page-turning magazine at the show. For more information and details of how to subscribe, see the Mash Media website at www.mashmedia.net

Rejuvenated Confex pulls in the crowds

UK – International Confex 2007 reported the biggest rise in visitor numbers at the show in seven years.

Preliminary figures released by CMPi indicated a 13 per cent leap in total attendance.

The pre-audit figures show

over 12,500 attending the Earls Court event this year, up from 11,127 in 2006.

"We're really happy with Confex and have been flooded with messages congratulating us on the best show yet," show director Duncan Reid tells

CMW. "We put in the hard work and the show was a success. Quality and quantity were both up and we changed the feel of the show as we hoped."

One of the add-on successes at Earls Court were the Confex

Knowledge seminars which attracted 3,285 attendees at the sessions, up from 1,282 in 2006 and 391 in 2005.

Keynote sessions were even streamed live to adjacent theatres to fulfil the demand for the speakers.