



Pieter Idenburg is the new CEO of the Suntec Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre

LOOKING FORWARD LOOKING BACK

THIS YEAR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AIPC, THE ASSOCIATION OF THE WORLD'S LEADING CONVENTION VENUES, WILL BE HELD IN SINGAPORE.

As delegates become more sophisticated, discerning and demand more from both venues and destinations, this is an excellent opportunity to share with each other how we can all raise the bar for our industry."

With these words, Pieter Idenburg, CEO of the Suntec Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre and chief host to the AIPC conference, announced an historic occasion.

"I am sure this conference will provide us with the knowledge on how to be better hosts by enhancing management expertise," he confided.

The 50th Anniversary Annual conference of AIPC will bring in visionaries from adjacent fields to discuss some of the most important issues facing the industry. "As always, we will combine outside perspectives with those of our global membership to develop strategies for response to what the future may bring," declared Edgar Hirt, president of AIPC.

Because the conference is being held in a part of the world with an important role to play in conventions, exhibitions and global business development, there is an even sharper focus this year. "We will be taking full advantage of this opportunity to

explore up close what new developments are unfolding and to converse with some of the key figures in this area that are shaping and driving our collective future," promised Hirt.

The Suntec Singapore venue sits in the heart of the city, steps away from one of the biggest shopping malls and a

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15-minute walk to 5,200 of the island's best hotel rooms. The Esplanade Theatres on the Bay is a three-minute stroll away.

Suntec is on the trackside route for the world's first Formula One night race in September and the world's biggest Ferris

wheel, the Singapore Flyer, is on the doorstep and will be in operation during AIPC.

In a conference programme entitled 'Where we've come from/Where we're going', the 50-year-old venue association will be remembering the days when the formal concept of purpose-built congress and convention facilities was first accepted.

But as well as reflecting on past efforts it will also be looking ahead with hindsight to visualise where the future lies.

Most of the predictable favourite topics are on the programme, but one: 'What expectations and changes a new generation of executives and delegates will bring to our facilities', appeared to be something of a departure. With Pieter Idenburg recently taking over from Warren Buckley at Suntec and Edgar Hirt newly moved to Hamburg from Munich, there's detectable movement within suppliers' ranks as well.

Other topics will include:

- ▶ The future impact of the Asian economy on the global business community
- ▶ Climate change and how it will influence the meetings industry
- ▶ The challenge to face to face communications from emerging communications technologies
- ▶ Industry relationships in an evolving market.

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