

40 YEARS OF PROGRESS

In the 40 years since it was formed, IAPCO has seen the meetings, conference and events industry grow and thrive, not only in economic terms but in terms of achievement, negotiation, education and advancement. And yet the benefits of this are often not recognised. At worse they are ignored.

"IAPCO PCOs represent a formidable driving force"

In 2007 alone, IAPCO members (just 100 worldwide) organised over 4,000 meetings, representing 1.8 million delegates and 0.5 million square metres of exhibition space, with a resulting economic impact of around 2.9 billion EUR.



Politicians Forum 2008

Such is the importance of gaining political recognition in Europe, IAPCO formed a European Chapter in 2007 which now represents 70% of the membership. European IAPCO PCOs represent a formidable driving force managing over 3,400 meetings with more than 1.4 million delegates. The Chapter aims to further promote the PCO profession, developing the brand within the European Union and strengthening its image and reputation, especially with regard to its training programme.

It is to IMEX's credit that the Politicians Forum is held, with the aim of informing governments, local authorities, city officials and civil servants, of the importance of this industry and, yes, how they can benefit by recognising and supporting the meetings industry. IAPCO supports this continuing initiative and looks forward to participating once again in the lively debate which forms an integral part of the Forum.



Patrizia Semprebene
Buongiorno, President,
IAPCO
www.iapco.org

Buzzword is 'legacy'



Association Evening 2009

International association meetings were the reason for ICCA's creation nearly half a century ago, and they remain the focus for almost all ICCA (International Congress & Convention Association) member services today. This explains why ICCA is so heavily involved with IMEX's Association Day programme. But whilst international association meetings are not the largest segment in our industry - international corporate meetings have a higher overall level of expenditure - their potential to engage the interest of national and city politicians is far greater than the numbers suggest.

"Politicians want to make a difference."

"Normally we talk with politicians in terms of bed-nights generated, delegate expenditure, and local jobs created: the traditional economic arguments of the tourism industry. What became apparent at the IMEX Politicians Forum was that another perspective was needed. The buzzword at the Forum was "legacy". Politicians want to make a difference, they want to point to improvements that they will be remembered for when they leave elected office, in education, in healthcare, through recognition of local industrial and scientific expertise," he explains.

"International association meetings can deliver these "legacy" benefits in a way that no

other meetings can. I recall speaking with an Australian geneticist who was inordinately proud of bringing his world congress to Melbourne, not because of the direct economic impact, but because over 1,000 Australian postgraduates and young professionals would be able to learn from that industry's greatest minds, and because the world's biggest investment specialists would be exposed to Australia's advanced research capacity."

Sirk concludes, "As an industry we are almost certainly guilty of failing to promote and advocate using the "legacy" argument. We fail to talk sufficiently loudly about trade development, about cultural understanding, about cures and new treatments for diseases and about advances in scientific understanding. ICCA members look forward to the next Politicians Forum in 2009 and to yet another tremendous Association Day, whose programme we're already developing with the IMEX team."

"More than ever I believe there is a crucial link between these two pillars of IMEX's success, and developing this connection in more depth will create some great opportunities for us in our advocacy efforts."



Martin Sirk, CEO, ICCA
www.iccaworld.org

Advancing dialogue in Europe

The European chapter of the International Special Events Society (ISES) exists to advance dialogue between European event experts and also to address the issues likely to face the German and European events industry in the future. ISES achieves this through periodic meetings of the ISES Lounge.

Aside from its own agenda, ISES also aims to promote the interests of its individual members across the sector, as well as in politics.

"The relationship between the events industry and political bodies will grow through this forum, and such dialogue will become even more important in the future", says Martin Osbeck, President of ISES Europe.

Future times and locations of the ISES Lounge can be found at www.ises-europe.com



Overcoming uncertainty

A slowing economy often means reduced convention activity and subsequently a drop in revenue for convention centres. Coming on the heels of strong business growth such as we've seen in the meetings industry in recent years, this can create problems as managers find themselves having to deal with higher expectations amongst owners.

"revenues alone are not a good measure of the economic benefit a centre brings"

The answer to such a challenge is one we're all familiar with - a community and an owner that are better educated about how this industry works and why revenues alone are not a good measure of the economic benefit a centre brings to its destination. The problem is, when times are good and a centre is busy, this need is less urgent. At the same time, there are few forums that offer a good opportunity to introduce local politicians

to the industry in a way that captures its full, international impact and potential.

However, the Politicians Forum at IMEX is such an opportunity. By bringing together a cross section of senior industry representatives and government leaders, it provides a chance not only for mutual education and an exchange of views, but also the opportunity for politicians to communicate some of the issues they commonly face.

The International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC) has been active in the Forum for many years. As global economic concerns continue, we believe the need for this kind of education is even greater, hence our continued participation in 2009.



Edgar Hirt, President, AIPC
www.aipc.org

Warm Belgrade welcome



The city of Belgrade hosted this year's Annual Conference and General Assembly for European Cities Marketing.

After the first day's popular social functions, delegates had the chance to attend a Thursday seminar entitled "Key Performance Indicators and Tourism - Do they really measure and improve the performance of destination marketing organisations?"

"These ECM meetings are crucial for the good functioning of our association. For our members it is an occasion to meet and share expertise during our "Working Group meetings" where participants focus their efforts on a specific task or project. These interactive yet structured sessions enable ECM to develop its activities in a very

dynamic way", explained Frank Magee, President of European Cities Marketing.

The whole team at the Belgrade Tourist Organisation (BTO) ensured that everybody enjoyed their stay by putting on an exciting social programme which included a tour of Belgrade and an excursion to its neighbouring city, Novi Sad.

"I was delighted to have the chance to host the ECM Annual Conference and General Assembly here in Belgrade. It is very important for us to welcome people from different European cities and to exchange experience and knowledge that is often very diverse and therefore extremely rich," said Olivera Lazovic, BTO Director.
www.europeancitiesmarketing.com

Air Crisis Task Force takes off



In an effort to ward off pressures on the availability of a safe, reliable and reasonably-priced air transportation system, the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) has created an Air Transportation Crisis Task Force.

The Task Force will develop best practice guidelines and also examine key issues such as the anticipated reduction of flights to certain cities, the elimination of air services to some communities and the inconveniences imposed upon the travelling business community by a disorganised system. It will also address U.S. Transportation Safety Agency-imposed obstacles, safety issues and other elements that, when combined, have the potential to make a serious impact on attendee numbers.

"new campaign stresses the power of face-to-face marketing"

IAEE has also launched an advertising campaign - BE THERE - designed to demonstrate the advantages of travelling to exhibitions and events. The new campaign stresses the power of face-to-face marketing and its major role in exhibitions and events, as well as the cost-saving aspects of reaching multiple clients and producing leads from a single location.

Both the Task Force and the campaign appear to be generating increased awareness and support as registration for IAEE's annual meeting is already up on the same period last year. Expo! Expo! will take place 9-11 December, in Miami Beach, Florida.

www.iaee.com