

AIPC



"Excellence in Convention Centre Management"

Founded: 1958

Membership: 160 members in 53 countries

AIPC Mission statement: AIPC is an international association of convention and exhibition centres whose mission is to support, encourage and recognise excellence in convention centre operation and management. Its programmes are directed toward enhancing the profile and performance of its members: purpose built facilities whose primary purpose is to accommodate and service meetings, conventions, congresses and exhibitions.

Activities:

- Industry research, analysis and technical publications
- Training, educational and professional development activities including the AIPC Academy
- Global marketing and communications for the industry
- Member networking and information exchange forums
- Quality standards and recognition programmes
- AIPC Apex Award for 'World's Best Congress Centre' and Innovation Award for management innovation

Characteristics: "AIPC is a true international organisation with representation from 53 countries world-wide. It focuses on the issues, opportunities and challenges facing convention and exhibition centres and promotes facility and operational excellence by encouraging and recognising high standards of facility management through a variety of association programmes while at the same time providing tools and resources to achieve them".

Annual Conference:

July 4-9, 2009 – La Coruna, Spain

Contact:

AIPC – International Association of Congress Centres

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Resilience is our strength

In the face of ongoing concerns about a possible global recession, AIPC member convention centres have continued to demonstrate strong bottom line performance and business optimism. While the full effects of current economic concerns may not yet have hit, there are at least three other reasons for this ongoing confidence:

First, conventions and exhibitions have been shown to be essential elements in the marketing and communications strategies of many organisations and corporations, and an understanding has emerged that these are not the areas to cut when external economic factors threaten. In fact, many now see that these kinds of activities should actually be increased in order to counter any potential threats to business and professional development when the economy is soft.

Second, many of the larger events that centres serve – particularly association conventions - now book so far in advance that current conditions actually have little effect on planning for what may be taking place years in the future. This factor alone creates a real stability in centre business by helping bridge the gaps that might otherwise result from shorter term economic concerns.

Finally, we have all seen the resilience of the industry and how it rebounded following the global security and financial disruptions earlier in the decade. In fact, business and convention related travel actually led the recovery from an overall travel slump because many delegates were prepared to travel when others were not. This resiliency demonstrates the power that meetings, conventions and exhibitions have in maintaining demand for travel products; a power which can again be expected to be a factor in any future economic slowdown.

Like all businesses, convention centres need to anticipate and prepare for changes in economic conditions, simply because these changes are cyclical and will impact on demand. However, with the experiences of the past and the built-in stability now strengthening many aspects of the industry, centre managers have every reason for optimism.

For its part, AIPC will continue to deliver the information, programmes and resources that members need to adapt to the new conditions and demands that emerge.

Edgar Hirt
President, AIPC