

Driving grass roots change



The last issue of Briefing was all about influence and the importance of representing the meetings industry at the highest levels of government. By demonstrating the value – economic, social and legacy – that meetings and events can bring to a destination we raise both our industry profile and standing.

Held under the auspices of the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) and co-organised with European Cities Marketing (ECM), the IMEX Politicians Forum gives the industry a chance to speak to policy makers from across the world and be heard with one consistent voice. In 2008 a record number of 25 politicians, representing local and regional government in Europe, Africa, Australia and Canada, attended IMEX and saw for themselves the scale and importance of our sector.

This year we will be showing politicians how meetings and events can influence the well-being of their destination as a major driver of economic development across a range of industries. Make your voice heard by inviting your local politician to attend the IMEX 2009 Politicians Forum, which will take place on Tuesday 26 May. For more information please contact Debbie Woodbridge DWoodbridge@imex-frankfurt.com. For a full report on the 2008 Forum see: www.imexfrankfurt.com/politforum.html.



Response for challenging times

AIPC's newest programme offerings are providing very timely support to members in three areas identified as among the most critical concerns in the industry today.

The AIPC Academy, an annual professional development programme, now entering its third year, is geared to providing an in-depth industry overview both for new manager orientation and for existing managers who need to broaden their industry perspective before taking on more senior roles.

“facilitates rapid development of international networks”

The Academy directly addresses the growing challenge of attracting competent, experienced staff at a time of growing labour shortages. It aims to advance their qualifications and also provides an incentive for staff to stay within the organisation. The Academy also facilitates the rapid development of international networks, as each Academy session brings together participants

from centres all over the world.

Also new and extremely timely is AIPC's new Quality Standards programme. These standards, and the audit process that accompanies them, enable AIPC member centres to distinguish their performance in an increasingly competitive market as well as enabling CEOs to assess achievement in key areas. The result is not only greater marketability but also potential advancements in operating efficiency and staff satisfaction.

Finally, the AIPC Sales and Marketing Summit will be staged at IMEX. It has created a forum for both identifying new market challenges and also developing skills and strategies to address them. In a time of rapid change, this kind of opportunity to share experiences and ideas with colleagues has become invaluable for everyone.



■ **Edgar Hirt**, President, AIPC and Managing Director, Congress Center Hamburg
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In control in Turkey

INCON will hold its first meetings of 2009 in Istanbul, the country of INCON partner Mustafa Gurbuz of SERENAS.

First of all, board members will discuss plans for the coming year. Members are aware of the impact the current economic climate could mean for their clients, although association meetings tend to remain stable whatever the over-riding trend. Nevertheless, INCON will focus on lowering any impact on their corporate and association client base.

“continues the INCON tradition of investing in staff and management education”

Following the board meeting, an INCON launch will be attended by members of the industry in Turkey, government officials and international press. INCON will give a series of talks on the industry from its viewpoint as

the leading consortium of professional conference organisers in the world.

The third meeting will be the INCON University with the theme of 'Sponsorship and Exhibitions'. This will be delivered through an excellent programme devised by Dean Roslyn McLeod. The University will be attended by senior staff from INCON's international partner base around the world and continues the INCON tradition of investing in staff and management education.

Following the successful launch of the 'We Put You in Control' marketing strategy at last year's IMEX, INCON also plans to expand on this theme at IMEX come May.

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